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BIG RESHUFFLE

EC transfers several top officials in Bengal

NEWS » PAGE 11

BIG INITIATIVE

'EU and UN discussing initiative for Hormuz Strait'

WORLD » PAGE 14

RAJYA SABHA POLLS

NDA wins eight seats in Bihar and Odisha

NEWS » PAGE 10

WEST ASIA ISSUE

Neighbourhood diplomacy

Conflict will test India's regional influence and strategic balance

EDITORIAL » PAGE 8

98TH ACADEMY AWARDS

Michael B. Jordan bags Oscar for *Sinners*

WORLD » PAGE 14

NEARBY

Govt. nod for Chinnaswamy to host IPL matches

BENGALURU
The State government on Monday officially cleared the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium for hosting IPL 2026 matches. This follows the multi-department expert committee submitting its assessment report, stating the stadium has undergone satisfactory upgrades.

» PAGE 5

'LPG crisis may push students to return home'

BENGALURU
Amid the ongoing disruption in commercial LPG supply, city corporations in the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) limits have begun receiving complaints from operators of paying guest (PG) accommodations. » PAGE 2

India to sign U.S. deal only after clarity on tariff rates

Any India-U.S. deal must be weighed against tariff structure and comparative advantage, says official; Commerce Secretary, however, maintains India remains engaged with U.S. on trade deal

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

India will sign a trade deal with the U.S. only after the country settles its "tariff architecture" and clarifies country-wise tariff rate, sources in the government have said.

"Any deal that we finalise and sign has to be seen against the tariff structure or comparative advantage that India gets in the U.S. market," a senior official in the Ministry of Commerce said. "The U.S. is working on trying to recreate a tariff architecture globally. If they are able to finalise that, at that juncture it would be right to sign the deal," the official said.

This comes against the backdrop of two trade-related investigations the U.S. is carrying out that could potentially see additional tariffs being levied on a number of countries, including India.

Meanwhile, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said that India remains engaged with the U.S. on a trade deal.

"Pursuant to the U.S. Supreme Court judgment dated February 20, 2026 invalidating reciprocal tariffs, the reciprocal tariffs are no longer in force," Mr. Agrawal told presspersons on Monday. "The U.S. government has issued Executive Orders imposing 10% tariffs pursuant to Section 122 of the Trade Act, 1974 on certain products from all countries," he added. "India remains engaged with the U.S. side for a mutually beneficial trade agreement," he said.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Tariff travails

In 2025, U.S. imposed 25% reciprocal tariffs on India. An additional 25% linked to import of Russian oil was later imposed taking total tariffs to 50%. A timeline of events thereafter:

- **Feb. 6, 2026:** India and the U.S. issue a statement on framework on interim pact
- Additional 25% Russian oil-linked tariff removed **(Tariff on India: 25%)**
- **Feb. 20:** U.S. SC strikes down reciprocal tariffs
- **Feb. 24:** U.S. imposes 10% tariff on all countries for 150 days. **Tariff on India: 10%**
- **Mar. 11-12:** USTR launches probe which could lead to additional tariffs
- **Mar. 16:** Govt. sources say deal will only be signed after U.S. finalises tariffs on India and other countries

India's trade deficit stands at $4 billion in Feb.

NEW DELHI
India's trade balance stood at a deficit of about $4 billion in February compared with a surplus of $2.7 billion a year earlier due in large part to merchandise exports staying flat while imports of both merchandise and services grew significantly during the month. » PAGE 13

Big tragedy: A patient being shifted after a fire broke out at the SCB Medical College Hospital in Cuttack on Monday. ANI

10 dead as fire breaks out in Odisha hospital

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

Ten patients died and several others were grievously injured when a fire broke out in an intensive care unit of SCB Medical College Hospital, Cuttack, allegedly due to a short circuit in the early hours of Monday.

"A major fire had broken out in the ICU of trauma care unit of SCB Medical College Hospital. Adjacent wards were also affected. As many as 23 patients undergoing treatment in the first floor of trauma care were shifted," said Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, who visited the hospital soon after the fire incident.

"While shifting them, seven patients died of injuries. Subsequently, another three patients died in ICUs during treatment," he said. He ordered a judicial probe into the incident.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Khader abruptly adjourns House

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Legislative Assembly on Monday witnessed a rare instance of the Speaker abruptly adjourning proceedings, unhappy with the government repeatedly ignoring his direction to furnish timely replies to members' questions.

Though the immediate trigger for Speaker U.T. Khader's action was Home Minister G. Parameshwara tabling only 84 answers against the 230 unstarred questions submitted on Monday, last week too he had raised similar concerns after only around 50 questions received responses. The session resumed after the Speaker held a meeting with Chief Minister, Home Minister and others. Dr. Parameshwara later assured the Speaker that action would be taken against officers who did not furnish replies in time.

FULL REPORT ON » PAGE 6

My target is to be in the top-30

After back-to-back titles in Thailand and Azerbaijan, the 20-year-old heads to the Orleans Masters in France looking to establish herself on the international badminton circuit

K.V.S. GIRI

INTERVIEW

Devika Sihag

Devyanshi Bihani

What began from the recreational courts of Panchkula has now taken Devika Sihag to the podium on the BWF circuit.

Her recent breakthrough performances at back-to-back tournaments in Thailand (a Super 300 event) and Azerbaijan, where she clinched the title, signal a promising phase in her young career and point to the emergence of a new offensive presence in Indian badminton.

She will next be in action at the Orleans Masters in France, beginning March 17 (Tuesday), as she looks to build on her recent run of form.

Hailing from Haryana, the same State that produced Olympian Saina Nehwal, the 5'9" shuttler literally stands tall with a frame that invites comparison with another Olympian P.V. Sindhu.

However, her ascent has not been without its structural and physical taxes. Battling the knee issues with her patella (the bone in front of the knee) inherent to tall athletes and overcoming the psychological complex of facing compatriots, Devika has been honing her game in the high performance environment of the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy (PPBA) in Bengaluru since 2018.

Training alongside Olympic pedigree and balancing a degree in Sports Management, the 20-year-old, is now deep into her preparations for the top tier.

In a conversation with *The Hindu*, Devika spoke about the tactical shifts behind her recent success, the influence of being a sparring partner to Sindhu, and her early experiences on the senior circuit. Excerpts:

Can you take me back to the very beginning? How were you introduced to badminton?

My father used to go to Tau Devi Lal Stadium in Panchkula just for his fitness and running. He thought he would put me and my younger brother in badminton just for an evening hobby. At first, it was just like that, but after some time, I started playing well and performed well at the State and National level. Then my parents thought that I could pursue it professionally.

At what point in your childhood did you realise you had to leave home to train professionally?

I didn't think about that. My coach suggested that now the level has increased, it is better to go there. I was 14 or 15 years old.

He convinced my parents and they talked with each other. That's how it was decided. The first two weeks were very difficult; I was homesick. But later on, it became better. But I still miss them sometimes.

There was some hesitation from your father about you moving to Bengaluru, and your mother had to convince him...

My father was convinced, but he felt I had to focus on my studies as well, so it would be difficult if I moved. But he knew it was important for me, so he agreed. Now, I have almost finished my studies.

I am in my final year of graduation, pursuing BBA in Sports Management from Chitkara University. I mostly study on my own, so it is manageable.

Who was your earliest coach in Panchkula, and who are you training with now?

My earliest coach in Panchkula was Rohit Mandhan. Currently, I am training with coach Irwansyah (Adi Pratama). When I first came here, before Irwansyah, I was training under Mr. Umendra Rana.

I am also very grateful to my CBE team – Sagar sir (Sagar Chopda), (Umendra) Rana sir, Irwansyah, Sayali *didi* (Sayali Gokhale), and all the support staff. I also get financial support from Olympic Gold Quest (OGQ) and the Haryana Badminton Association (HBA). I am really thankful to them as well.

You're currently training in one of the best environments in India.

K. MURALI KUMAR

Who are the seniors or peers you train alongside, and how has watching their daily routine influenced your work ethic?

I have been training with Sindhu *didi* and Irwansyah for a few months now. It is a very good experience. She is a two-time Olympic medallist, so she knows what has to be done.

I watch her; she is very disciplined and does her work very meticulously. I have learned many things from her. She has good smashes and good footwork. I hope to learn more things from her.

You have a distinct advantage with your height compared to many other shuttlers, but of course, that comes with its own challenges. How did your coaches help you adapt your game to your frame?

My coaches always tell me that because of my height, I can play good back strokes. I can have good smashes and steep drops. So they have always made me work to improve that area.

I think tall players have a little bit of an advantage from the back, but it comes with consequences as well. Because of my height, I had knee pain for at least one year.

It was an on-and-off pain. I still get it, but it is not as bad as earlier. I've been doing my rehab and I consult my physios if I have pain.

Looking back at your training before the national set-up, what was your fitness regime like?

Where I used to train before, I didn't know about the scientific side. We didn't use to do much gym; we used to do light gym or just run and do on-court sessions. But here it was a balance of everything. I got to know the importance of the gym after coming here. So it helped me improve myself.

Tell us about your training schedule and diet?

We train around seven-eight hours in a day. We have half days on Wednesday and Saturday, and Sundays are off. In tournaments, I like Asian food, like ramen and Japanese food. At home, I mostly eat vegetarian food because my family is vegetarian. So I just eat what my mum makes.

With the increased travel, how are you managing the physical toll to stay injury-free?

It's really difficult. If we are travelling to two tournaments together, the time zone is really different. This happened to me in Thailand and Azerbaijan; there was a three-hour difference. So I just try to recover by eating good food and covering up my sleep.

Against Supanida Katethong at the Thailand Masters, you were praised for your composure and control at crucial moments. How difficult was it to stick to your game plan?

Before the match, I just thought that Supanida is really an attacking player and she is really fast on court. So I just thought I'll keep everything in. I will also attack, I won't go too much into defence, but I have to match her pace. That helped me.

You stated that in Thailand you stopped thinking about winning or losing. Was there a specific conversation that triggered this?

Irwansyah talked to me before the match. He just said that I don't have to worry too much. If we lose, we'll come back and train harder and work on our mistakes. I wouldn't say there was no pressure, but, my pressure was released a bit. So, I played calmly.

If you compare your game now to one year ago, what is the biggest mental or tactical shift you have made?

I would say that my speed is good; it has been better than before. Irwansyah has said that I have good strokes, but I have to work on my footwork and be faster on court. I can see that helping me in matches.

It has been better from before, and I can see that that is helping me as well in matches. So, I hope I can improve in that aspect more.

What are your targets for the next 12 months?

For this year, my target is to come in the top-30. I hope to get entries into Super 300 and 500 tournaments, and perform well in them.

Will once again request Centre to assess LPG needs of eateries: Assn.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Amid continuing disruptions in the supply of commercial LPG and mounting pressure on the hotel industry, the Bangalore Hotels' Association said it would once again approach the Central government, requesting it to assess the LPG requirements of eateries in Bengaluru and allocate 20% cylinders accordingly.

S.P. Krishnaraj, joint secretary of the association, said they had been informed that only 1,000 cylinders would be made available to hotels out of the 9,000 commercial cylinders supplied on Sunday, as priority was being given to essential services such as hospitals and schools. While acknowledging the need to prioritise critical institutions, Mr. Krishnaraj said the decision was unfair to the hospitality sector, which also serves the public and supports a large supply chain involving milk vendors, vegetable suppliers and other raw material providers.

"There are nearly 40,000 hotels and eateries in Bengaluru. If just 1,000 cylinders are allocated, how is that supposed to work?" he argued. The association, he said, would request the government to allocate about 20% of the requirement so that kitchens can continue operating at a basic level.

'LPG shortage may push students to return home'

Paying guest operators have complained to GBA they are struggling to prepare food for students

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

Students say many PGs have stopped serving regular meals, while eateries in nearby areas have already increased food prices by ₹5 to ₹10 per item. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Amid the ongoing disruption in commercial LPG supply, city corporations in the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) limits have begun receiving complaints from operators of paying guest (PG) accommodations.

They said the situation was affecting food services for students, pushing them to consider returning to their hometowns.

Several PG operators, officials from the corporations said, have reported that they were struggling to cook as LPG cylinders have become difficult to procure. Students said many PGs have stopped serving regular meals, while eateries in nearby areas have already increased food prices by ₹5 to ₹10 per item.

"Multiple PGs have reached out to us (corporation commissioners) highlighting the pressure they are facing due to the LPG disruption," a senior GBA official said. "Operators say they tried exploring alternatives, but induction stoves cannot support cooking for such large numbers, and most kitchens they operate from are not designed for firewood or other fuels," he said.

However, the GBA officials said their immediate priority was to ensure that essential services such as hospitals and Indira Canteens continue to receive LPG supply. "Beyond that, we will try to support PG operators wherever possible, but our capacity to intervene is limited," an official said.

A PG operator in Vasanth Nagar, who runs three accommodations catering to students, said they earlier prepared food for all the PGs from a common kitchen and also supplied meals to a few nearby PGs that did not have in-house cooking facilities.

"After the crisis began, we calculated how long our existing cylinders would last and informed students within two days that we may not be able to continue regular food services," he said. "We understand that students are facing difficulties, but the situation is the same for all operators and caterers. There is simply no alternative we can switch to immediately," he said.

Students hit

The students said the disruption has already started affecting their daily routine. Disha J., a student at St. Joseph's University, said, "The PG where I stay does not have a kitchen and relies entirely on food supplied through a mess arrangement."

"We don't have a kitchen here, and we never kept an induction stove because most of us spend the day in college and depend on the mess for meals," she said. "Initially the mess said they would at least provide rice items, but now even breakfast has been cut. Outside eateries have also increased prices by ₹10 to ₹15 per item. Many in my batch are considering going back home until the situation gets better," she said. Hoteliers, however, said the price increases are unavoidable as they are struggling to procure cylinders at much higher rates through different channels.

"I borrowed two cylinders from a fellow hotelier who had extra stock and paid almost double the usual price," said Mahesh Bhat, who runs a small eatery in Vasanth Nagar. "For three cylinders I had to spend more than ₹6,000 each, and even those will last only for a couple of days. We are not increasing prices for profit, we are just trying to keep the kitchen running and pay our staff during this unexpected crisis."

'Rocket stove' draws attention amid crisis

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

A rocket stove is a compact wood-burning stove designed to maximise heat while using minimal fuel. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

With the ongoing disruption in commercial LPG supply affecting restaurants across Bengaluru, 65-year-old city resident Ashok Urs has been receiving calls from hoteliers curious about an alternative he developed six years ago- a fuel-efficient "rocket stove". Mr. Urs, who has worked with the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation in India and abroad, said he built the stove with rural households in mind, particularly in parts of Karnataka where people still depend heavily on firewood for cooking. At that time, his aim was to create awareness about more efficient ways of using biomass, especially in areas where wood was either scarce or harvested unsustainably.

"In many rural areas, people still cook on open fires that consume large amounts of wood and produce a lot of smoke. I wanted to show that the same work can be done with far less fuel," he said. In many homes, especially in rural areas, cooking with firewood means spending hours in smoke-filled spaces, which can irritate the eyes and lungs. Mr. Ashok said the rocket stove was designed to address this problem as well. Because the fuel burns more completely and at a higher temperature, it produces far less smoke than conventional wood-fired stoves.

A rocket stove is a compact wood-burning stove designed to maximise heat while using minimal fuel. It typically consists of an insulated, L-shaped combustion chamber that improves airflow and creates a strong draft. This allows small pieces of biomass such as coconut shells, twigs, sticks, dry leaves or agricultural waste to burn at a higher temperature and more completely than in conventional stoves.

Compared to traditional wood-fired stoves or open fires, the design can significantly cut down the amount of firewood required. Each unit currently costs around ₹3,000.

While the stove was originally developed for rural households, the ongoing LPG disruption has prompted some small eateries to explore whether such low-fuel alternatives could offer temporary relief during supply shortages, he said.

Appaji canteen downs shutters

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

'Namma Deve Gowda Appaji Canteen' has been temporarily closed owing to the disruption in the supply of commercial gas cylinders in the city. Named after former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, the canteen has been operating since 2017 with the objective of providing meals and snacks to people at highly subsidised prices.

T.A. Sharavana, Member of the Legislative Council from the Janata Dal (Secular) who runs the canteen, said on the social media platform X that recent disruptions in the supply of commercial LPG cylinders have made it difficult to operate the canteen.

Data from redBus shows steady rise in women travellers from Karnataka

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

State-level insights from a report by online bus ticketing platform redBus show a steady rise in women's participation in intercity bus travel across Karnataka.

According to the company's internal data that encapsulates private and RTC buses available on the platform, women travellers grew by 103% in 2025, compared to 2019, outpacing the growth of overall travellers in Karnataka.

Another interesting trend showed that solo travel by women increased by 76% compared to 2019, highlighting a strong shift towards independent journeys.

Incidentally, Shakti Scheme that provides free travel to women in non-premium services of RTCs was introduced in Karnataka in July, 2023, and has since encouraged women travel, data shows.

The redBus Pink Report was released during International Women's History Month, based on internal data between 2019 and 2025.

State among top eight

According to the report, Karnataka is also one of the top eight States for women's travel. The result was an outcome of evaluation based on women's share of travellers nationally, the proportion of solo women travellers, and the number of women undertaking long-distance journeys (more than 500 km). The other top States include Assam, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Telangana, Pondicherry, and Arunachal Pradesh. In Karnataka, women's share of intercity bus travel accounted for 33% in 2025, up from 25% in 2019, indicating a steady rise in participation.

Data from the platform also showed that 31% of people undertaking long-distance bus journeys above 500 km are women, indicating rising confidence in intercity travel for work, education, and personal needs.

Flying solo

The 21-30 age group grew by 86% since 2019, emerging as a key driver of intercity travel demand. At the same time, solo journeys among women in this age group increased by 71%.

A statement from the company noted that the trends were indications that women's travel in Karnataka was becoming more frequent, long-distance oriented, and increasingly independent, with a strong balance between solo travel and women-led group bookings. It noted that the findings reflect how women's mobility has evolved in the post-pandemic period, supported by greater digital adoption, strong intercity connectivity, and rising participation in education and the workforce.

"Southern States continue to lead the way in shaping women's intercity mobility in India, with Karnataka emerging as one of the top-performing markets. Women's travel in India today reflects more than just rising journeys; it signals a growing sense of independence. More women across India are choosing to travel on their own terms, for work, education, opportunity or leisure," said Prakash Sangam, CEO, redBus.

'Plan beautification of spaces beneath flyovers'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Tushar Giri Nath, Additional Chief Secretary of the Urban Development Department, has directed officials to prepare a comprehensive plan for the development and beautification of spaces beneath flyovers across Bengaluru.

Mr. Nath, during a review meeting on Monday, said many of the lower portions of major flyovers in the city remain underdeveloped, affecting the city's overall aesthetics. He asked officials to identify such locations under flyovers built by the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA), and prepare a detailed plan for their development.

The meeting also reviewed plans for planting saplings, establishing solid waste transfer stations, and improving parking management across the city. The senior official directed the city corporations, BMRCL, BWSSB and BDA, to take steps to plant and nurture saplings in their respective jurisdictions. He specifically instructed officials to plant bamboo along roadsides and around lakes, and asked the BWSSB to prepare a plan to develop green cover around sewage treatment plants (STPs). Officials from the Forest Department were also directed to identify locations for installing tree stands and submit a cost estimate.

Towing officers

On parking management, Mr. Nath called for a comprehensive review of the existing parking system across the five city corporations and directed officials to frame appropriate regulations. He also asked them to explore the possibility of using vacant sites or private plots along roadsides for parking facilities and to suggest incentives that could be offered to landowners. Separate towing officers should be designated for each of the five city corporations to remove abandoned vehicles, he said.

The meeting also reviewed the progress of solid waste management infrastructure. Second-level solid waste transfer stations have already been set up in three zones, while work is under way at four more locations. He directed officials to call tenders and issue work orders for eight additional sites and said district collectors must immediately hand over government land wherever required for these facilities.

EDUCATION HUB

A Business Initiative

Orchids International School Launches Project Anant: Learning Without Limits — A First-of-Its-Kind School Space Program — Alongside 21st Century Skills Labs in Dharwad

Orchids The International School launched Project Anant: Learning Without Limits at its campus in Dharwad, in the presence of A. S. Kiran Kumar, Former Chairman of ISRO. The initiative introduces school students to real-world space science through a structured satellite-based learning program. Project Anant centers on Orchids Satellite Mission-1, developed with Dhruva Space's L.E.A.P Mission. Around 2,000 students will participate in learning modules and activities, 100 students will visit the satellite integration facility, and 25-30 students will work directly on post-launch data analysis. The satellite payload includes an Earth imaging camera, space X-ray detector, and magnetometer, allowing students to study Earth observation, solar activity, and geomagnetic data. The event also launched 21st Century Skills Labs (coding, robotics, and horticulture) and hosted an astronomy immersion program with a portable planetarium and interactive space science activities. Overall, the initiative aims to build early space literacy, critical thinking, and real-world STEM skills among school students.

International Women's Day celebration organised by Sai Vidya Institute of Technology and Sai Vidya First Grade College in Bengaluru – talk on Cancer Awareness Essential for Everyone

Emphasizing the importance of health awareness, renowned cancer specialist Vijayalakshmi Deshmane stated that women must be well-informed about breast cancer to safeguard their health in today's times. She was speaking at the International Women's Day celebration jointly organized by Sai Vidya Institute of Technology and Sai Vidya First Grade College in Bengaluru. Dr. Deshmane reassured the audience that cancer should not be feared, as it is a treatable disease. Encouraging a positive and proactive mindset, she urged people not to fear the disease but instead approach it with courage and focus on timely action. She further added that professionals and institutions in the engineering and technology sectors can contribute significantly by developing innovative solutions to address challenges related to cancer. She also shared her inspiring personal journey–from growing up in a financially challenged family in Kalaburagi to becoming the Director of Kidwai Cancer Institute and receiving the prestigious Padma Shri. The event was attended by several dignitaries including Manjunath T. N., Principal of Sai Vidya Institute of Technology; Jogish D., Principal of Sai Vidya First Grade College; Vrinda Shetty, President of the SARA Women's Unit; Vani B. P., Convener; along with other distinguished guests.

BMS College of Architecture, Design and Planning Hosts Workshop on Precinct-Level Accessibility Audit

BMS College of Architecture, Design and Planning in Bengaluru, in collaboration with the Centre of Excellence in Urban Planning and Design at Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, hosted a three-day workshop (5-7 March 2026) on precinct-level accessibility auditing. The programme trained participants in evaluating accessibility in built environments using spatial audit checklists and simulation-based techniques. Experts from IIT Kharagpur including Prof. Dr. Haimanti Banerji, Prof. Dr. Gaurab Das Mahapatra, and Dr. Ushnata Datta delivered lectures on universal design and accessibility audit methods. Participants also conducted field audits and used simulation tools such as geriatric and maternity suits, smart canes, wheelchairs, and a haptic suit to experience mobility challenges faced by elderly people and persons with disabilities. The workshop conducted under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Vidya Srikanth, Director, BMSCA D&P brought together academics, government officials, and students to promote inclusive urban design practices.

Inauguration of a seminar titled 'Pathways to Decarbonisation and Sustainability', organized by the Department of Mechanical Engineering at Nitte Meenakshi Institute of Technology in Bengaluru.

Bill McQuade, President of ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers), said healthy homes must ensure good ventilation, air quality, lighting, comfort, and safe water to support well-being and sustainability, while noting that indoor air pollution in India has caused millions of deaths and requires stronger regulation. He also emphasized the health benefits of natural daylight. The seminar at Nitte Meenakshi Institute of Technology was attended by Arun Doraisami, Associate Engineering Leader at Digital-ETC, Trane Technologies in Chennai and several academic and government officials.

International Women's Day Programme at Soundarya Institute of Management & Science

Soundarya Institute of Management and Science celebrated International Women's Day, at Sir Ratan Tata Hall, Soundarya College, with the theme "Give to Gain: Women Leaders Shaping Health, Education, Business and Social Progress." The event began with a 4-km walkathon involving over 500 participants to promote women's empowerment. Organized by the SPARSH Women's Empowerment Cell with partners including Fortis Healthcare, the programme featured a panel of women leaders from journalism, law enforcement, business, academia, and healthcare included Radha Hiregoudar, journalist, Guarantee News Kannada; Shilpa Devaiah, IPS officer, Superintendent of Police, Central Bureau of Investigation, Bengaluru; Sayanee Bhowmik, Entrepreneur, Former Venture Capitalist; Dr. Chethana M. R., Academician; and Dr. Sneha Rajiv, Gynaecologist & Obstetrician, Fortis Hospital. who shared insights on leadership and social impact, inspiring students to pursue opportunities and leadership roles.

‘IIIT-Hyderabad app turns impaired speech into clear speech in near-real-time’

While the current project runs in English, the team’s next aim is to take these technologies to regional languages, like Hindi, Telugu, and Tamil, as many in India do not have the means to benefit from accessibility-focused AI models. For this work, Vineet Gandhi won the ANRF award in 2026

INTERVIEW

Vineet Gandhi

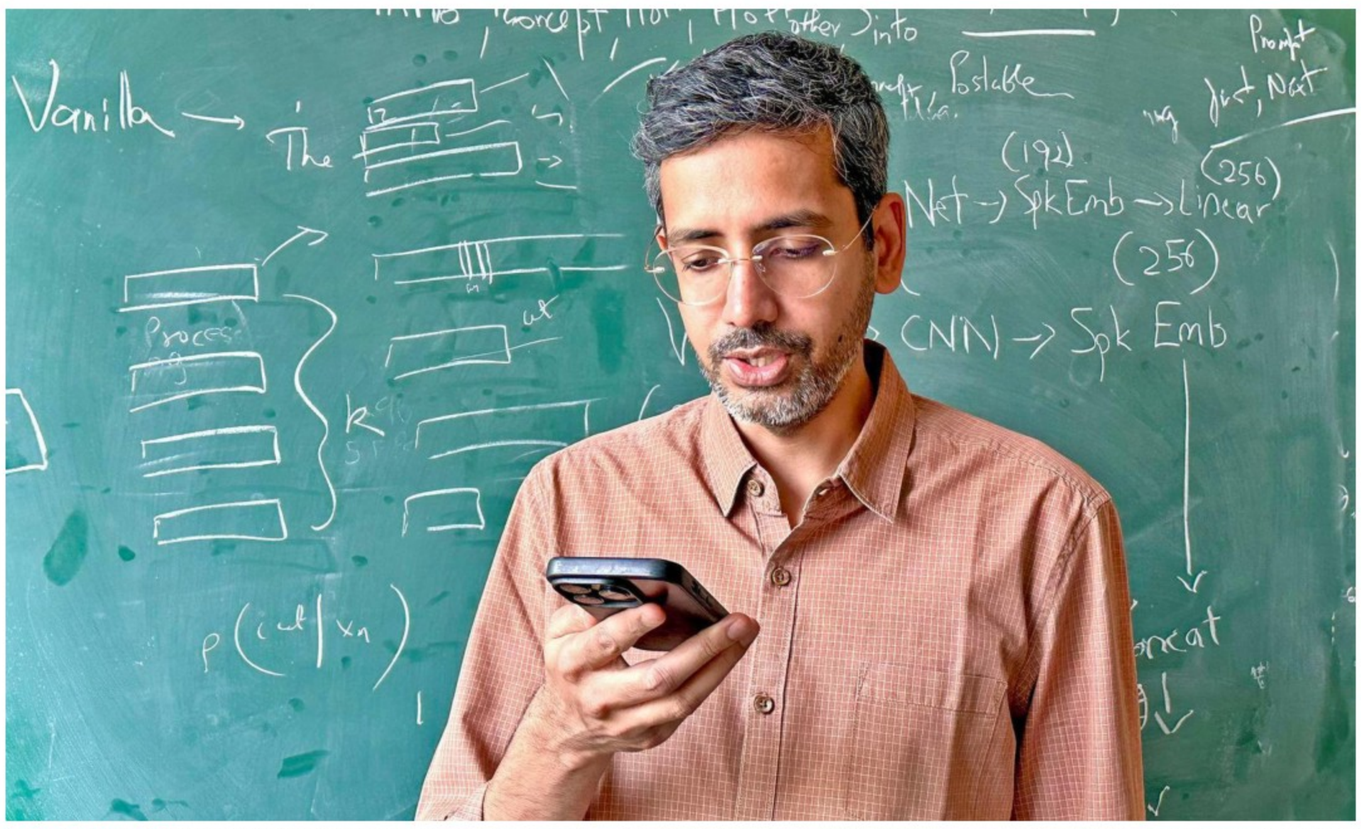
Divya Gandhi

A whisper. A few slurred words. For those who suffer from dysarthria, a motor speech disorder, basic communication is a challenge, indelibly affecting both their professional and personal life. But now a new innovation based on artificial intelligence (AI) and developed in India could be life-changing.

Led by associate professor Vineet Gandhi of the International Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Hyderabad, a team has developed a simple app that can help people talk as an audio translation converts the speaker’s voice almost in real-time. The app can either convert slurred speech into clear, natural-sounding speech or use a camera to analyse lip movements and subtle throat vibrations to generate intelligible speech.

While the current project runs in English, the team’s next aim is to take these technologies to regional languages, including Hindi, Telugu, and Tamil, as many across the country do not have the means to benefit from accessibility-focused AI models. For this work, Mr. Gandhi won the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) award in 2026.

Excerpts from an interview:



Speech alchemist: Vineet Gandhi of IIIT-Hyderabad, leader of the team that developed an app that converts slurred speech into clear speech or uses a camera to analyse lip movements and subtle throat vibrations to generate intelligible speech.

What inspired you to begin work on this humanitarian AI project?

My research has always been driven by a simple question: what real problem can technology help solve?

While my academic training is primarily in computer vision, about four years ago, I began to see exciting possibilities emerging in speech research and decided to explore the field more deeply. I became increasingly aware of the challenges faced by many individuals who lose their ability to speak due to medical conditions: the impact of this loss extends far beyond communication – it affects independence, identity, and connection.

Recognising this need inspired me to focus my work on accessibility-driven technologies designed to restore or enable speech, with the goal of helping people regain their voice.

Could you describe how the app works for people with speech impairment?

The app is designed to convert impaired or distorted speech into clear, natural-sounding speech with only a few hundred milliseconds of delay. A user simply speaks in their own voice, and the system processes it to produce intelligible speech for the listener.

We are also developing a complementary lip-to-speech capability, where a person can silently move their lips and the system generates the corresponding speech.

A key aspect we are focusing on is personalisation, where users can calibrate and refine the application to their voice by reading few minutes of text on the app.

We aim for these technologies to be integrated into common communication platforms, such as web-based calling applications, making everyday communication easier for people with speech impairments.

You also aim to expand this technology to regional Indian languages. How do you hope to achieve this?

At present, much of the global speech technology ecosystem is predominantly designed for English, and our initial experiments have naturally followed the same trajectory. However, a major goal of our research is to extend these capabilities to regional Indian languages, where accessible speech technologies are equally important.

To achieve this, we plan to collect speech data in Indian languages and develop data-efficient models suited for low-resource scenarios. Our approach includes data augmentation and efficient fine-tuning of pre-trained models.

We have already conducted preliminary experiments in Hindi with promising results, and with support from the Anusandhan National Research Foundation, we aim to further enhance and expand this work to additional Indian languages.

You believe that “accessibility and linguistic diversity” are crucial for AI research in India. Could you elaborate?

Accessibility and linguistic diversity are fundamental considerations for AI research in India. Having spent several years in Europe, I observed that accessibility is far more systematically integrated into public infrastructure and digital services there.

In contrast, India still has significant gaps, even in public spaces such as railway stations, where basic accessibility provisions are often limited. This highlights the broader need to design technologies that consciously include people with disabilities.

At the same time, India’s linguistic diversity presents another important dimension. In many parts of the country, particularly in rural regions, speech remains the most natural and primary mode of interaction. Text-heavy or typing-based interfaces may not always be practical or inclusive in such contexts. Therefore, AI systems designed for India must prioritise speech-based interaction and support multiple regional languages.

Taken together, meaningful accessibility and strong support for linguistic diversity are essential if digital technologies are to be truly inclusive and widely usable across the country.

WHO has said the “future of healthcare is digital”...

The World Health Organization has emphasised that the future of healthcare will be increasingly digital. In a country like India, telemedicine can play a transformative role, particularly when supported by basic diagnostic infrastructure at the local level, which enables more accurate remote consultations.

Another important direction is AI-assisted diagnostics, where machine learning systems analyse medical images, speech, or health records to support early disease detection and prediction.

Practical solutions are already emerging. For example, ‘Shishu Maapan’ developed by Wadhwani AI helps measure newborn weight and size simply from mobile photos and is being adopted by frontline health workers such as ASHA workers.

Digital tools are also enabling assistive healthcare technologies, including speech restoration systems for individuals who have lost their ability to speak, and wearable devices that continuously monitor health parameters and alert doctors to potential anomalies. These developments illustrate how digital innovation can make healthcare more accessible and scalable.

A common criticism of AI-generated speech is that while it’s intelligible, it often fails to capture the unique cadence of the speaker. When restoring a voice to someone with dysarthria, how do you balance the need for clear communication with the need to preserve the user’s individual human essence?

This is an important concern. If recordings of the speaker’s original voice from before the onset of dysarthria are available, modern voice cloning techniques can recreate that voice with as little as 10 seconds of speech. So preserving an individual’s vocal identity is technically feasible today, and there is substantial research demonstrating this capability.

Our current app, however, focuses primarily on restoring content intelligibility, ensuring that what the user intends to say is conveyed clearly. For now, the generated speech uses a common voice rather than a personalised one.

That said, text-to-speech systems are becoming increasingly natural, to the point that they are now being integrated into conversational bots replacing many traditional customer service applications. Emotional nuance remains more challenging, as we discussed in our earlier work on empathic speech generation , but progress is rapid.

How does the model differentiate between impaired speech and a noisy background as the user navigates, say, a busy Indian street?

This is indeed a significant challenge in India, where real-world environments can be extremely chaotic. Anyone who has thought about deploying self-driving cars here quickly realises how unpredictable our roads can be: traffic patterns, honking, pedestrians, and vehicles all interacting in highly dynamic ways. Speech technology faces a similar level of complexity.

In our experiments, we improve robustness using noise augmentation, where we simulate different noisy environments during training so the model learns to handle background sounds.

Ultimately, the most effective solution is to collect and train on more real-world data from noisy settings. Even then, some performance degradation is inevitable because separating impaired speech from heavy background noise is fundamentally a difficult problem.

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Plumes of smoke rise from an oil facility in Fujairah, the UAE, on Saturday. AP

Environment: yet another casualty of the West Asia war

Agence France-Presse

From the jet fuel used in bombing raids to acrid smoke from burning oil depots, the conflict in West Asia is inflicting a significant toll on nature and the climate.

U.S. and Israeli aircraft use a considerable amount of fuel reaching the Gulf and flying sorties over Iran, said Benjamin Neimark at Queen Mary University of London.

Deploying stealth bombers and fighter jets around the clock adds a significant amount of planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere.

“The U.S. Navy also has a significant fleet which will be operating remotely for some time,” Neimark said. “That is a significant number of U.S. troops that need to be fed, housed, and working around the clock. These floating cities all need energy.”

This is provided in part by diesel generators, even if most larger aircraft carriers are nuclear powered, an energy source that produces far less emissions than fossil fuels. But many experts take into account everything from the manufacture of weapons and explosives to post-war reconstruction efforts when

The Gaza conflict generated some 33 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, an amount comparable to 7.6 million petrol-powered cars

estimating the total environmental impact of conflict.

According to one study published in the peer-reviewed journal *One Earth*, the Gaza conflict generated some 33 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, an amount comparable to 7.6 million petrol-powered cars or the annual emissions of a small country like Jordan.

By one estimate, the war in Ukraine has caused more than 300 million tonnes of additional emissions, equivalent to France’s annual output.

This estimate, by the Initiative on GHG Accounting of War, takes into account military operations and reconstruction efforts, forest fires, and longer flight routes.

This conflict is playing out on the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial artery for the passage of oil and gas supplies to global markets that depend on energy from the Gulf.

Ships transporting these highly flammable fuels through the narrow waterway, along with the region’s oil and gas refineries and storage facilities, were “all a target” in this war, said Neimark.

“We have already seen a significant amount of refineries targeted. These toxic flames are deadly and have a severe climate cost.”

Since erupting on February 28, the conflict has sent oil prices soaring and focused fresh attention on the global transition to cleaner, more climate-friendly forms of energy.

Andreas Rudinger, from the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations, said the economic knock-on effects of the war had put policy makers “under pressure to reduce the burden on prices over climate action”.

But there’s also a “glass half-full perspective”, Rudinger said: “From a purely economic standpoint... rising fossil fuel prices make decarbonisation and electrification solutions more attractive,” he said.

He pointed to the rise in popularity of heat pumps in the aftermath of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, which caused energy prices in Europe to rise sharply.

Apart from climate concerns, strikes on energy infrastructure, oil tankers and military targets pollute the surrounding air and water and spread highly toxic chemicals far and wide, experts say.

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

A quiz on science films at the Oscars through history

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

Steven Spielberg directed X, a 1977 film about celestial phenomena and government research. It focused on the linguistic and mathematical challenges of communicating with extraterrestrial visitors using light and sound, culminating at a place called Devil’s Tower. Name X.

QUESTION 2

Focusing on radio astronomy and the SETI program, this 1997 adaptation of a Carl Sagan novel explored how a dedicated scientist detected prime numbers transmitted from the Vega system and depicted voyage through a wormhole onboard a complex alien transport. Which film?

QUESTION 3

Which 1990 film nominated for the Oscar for Best Picture depicted neurologist Oliver Sacks’s clinical breakthrough of using a drug called L-DOPA to revive patients immobilised by encephalitis lethargica? The film explored the biochemistry of the human brain and the fleeting yet bittersweet nature of the drug.

QUESTION 4

This 1983 film focused on aeronautics and human physiology in extreme conditions in the course of dramatising the transition from supersonic flight to entering earth orbit. The story itself followed the seven pilots selected for Project Mercury, the U.S.’s first human spaceflight programme. Name the film.

QUESTION 5

When 12 monolithic vessels descend on places around the earth, a linguistics professor studies the aliens’ semagrams to establish communication, exploring the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and theoretical physics involving the perception of non-linear time. Name this cerebral masterpiece.

Visual: Name this late American visual effects supervisor known for his science-themed scenes in 2001: *A Space Odyssey, Blade Runner, and The Tree of Life*, among others. JULIAN HERZOG

Answers to March 10 quiz:
1. Name of the terms denoting collective nouns for animals – **Ans: Venery**
2. Primates that are together called a ‘troop’ or a ‘congress’ – **Ans: Baboons**
3. Ominous birds of ill omen in the 15th century – **Ans: Ravens**
4. Collective noun for rhinoceroses – **Ans: Crash**
5. Collective noun for apes because they’re mischievous – **Ans: Shrewdness**
Visual: **Murmuration**

First contact
Tamal Biswas | K.N. Viswanathan | Anmol Agrawal | Partheeban Natesh | Madhav Singh Gurjar

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Estimated increase in global demand for LNG by 2040

54 in per cent. Global demand for liquefied natural gas is estimated to rise by 54-68% by 2040 and 45-85% by 2050, from 422 million metric tons in 2025, Shell, the world's biggest trader of LNG, said on Monday. A year ago, Shell said that global demand for the fuel was expected to rise between 630 million and 718 million metric tons a year by 2040. REUTERS

Number of child abuse cases reported in Pakistan in 2025

3,630 At least 3,630 child abuse cases were reported across Pakistan in 2025, marking an 8% increase from the year before that, according to data released by Sahil, a non-profit entity. It said that gender divide analysis shows that out of the total reported cases of child abuse, 1,924 (53%) of victims were girls. PTI

Flights cancelled by Indian airlines due to West Asia conflict

4,335 Union Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammohan Naidu on Monday informed the Rajya Sabha that Indian airlines have cancelled 4,335 flights and 1,187 flights by foreign carriers so far due to the West Asia conflict. The escalating conflict involving the U.S., Israel and Iran has significantly disrupted flight operations. PTI

Decrease in fire incidents in Punjab and Haryana

90 in per cent. Punjab and Haryana have collectively recorded a reduction of more than 90% in fire incidents during the paddy-harvesting season in 2025, compared to 2022, the government informed Parliament on Monday. The information was shared by Union Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh. PTI

Number of biodiversity management committees set up

2.76 in lakh. Biodiversity Management Committees have been established in India, strengthening community participation in biodiversity governance and benefit-sharing mechanisms, the first report on the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol has said. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Why India must electrify its kitchens

Is electric cooking cheaper and more efficient than LPG for Indian households? Can induction cooktops handle the realities of everyday Indian cooking? Can smart technologies help flatten electricity peaks? What policy changes are needed for India to shift from LPG to electric kitchens?

EXPLAINER

Kalyan Mangalapalli

The story so far:
India spends $26.4 billion a year importing cooking gas, most of it shipped through the Strait of Hormuz. It has 332 million LPG connections, yet 37% of households still burn firewood and dung. The arithmetic has shifted: cooking with electricity is now cheaper than cooking with unsubsidised LPG. But moving hundreds of millions of kitchens from flame to wire raises a chain of questions about cost, grid stress, and who pays when demand spikes.

Why is gas-based clean cooking hitting a wall?
Domestic LPG connections grew from 150 million in 2015 to 332 million by 2025, but India imports 60% of its LPG and 50% of its natural gas. The Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) estimates that the combined import bill reached $26.4 billion in FY24-25 – a 50% jump in six years.

Every West Asian escalation sends a price shock straight into Indian kitchens. Gas-based clean cooking has hit an affordability ceiling.

Can electricity beat gas on cost, efficiency, and everyday cooking?
An IEEFA study from October 2025 found that electric cooking is 37% cheaper than non-subsidised LPG and 14% cheaper than piped natural gas for a family of four in Delhi – even without any electricity subsidy. Only the heavily subsidised Prime Minister Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) pricing undercuts e-cooking, and that subsidy costs the exchequer thousands of crores each year.

The efficiency gap is equally stark. Induction cooktops transfer about 85% of their energy to the vessel, while an LPG burner manages roughly 40%. Electric pressure cookers, tested across the MECS programme's multi-country cooking diaries, use less energy than any other device assessed.

Indian cooking is not a single-pot affair. Anyone who makes chapatis, does a *tadka*, and stirs a *dal* simultaneously knows that a standard single-plate induction unit will not suffice.

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) argues that research and development on multi-pot and flame-replicating induction models is essential before mass adoption can take off, not as an afterthought, possibly explaining the 5% electric cooking share in 2021.

Both the International Institute for Sustainable Development and IEEFA recommend starting with urban kitchens, thereby freeing imported LPG for rural areas that still lack reliable electricity.

The logic is sound – but it leads to a harder question: if a hundred million urban kitchens switch on induction cooktops in the evening, what happens to the power grid?

What is a 'peak'?
Electricity demand shifts throughout the day. It ramps up around 3 p.m. and again from 9-11 p.m., mostly because households all flip on lights, fans, TVs, and ACs at the same time. This surge is called the 'peak.'

India's peak demand rose from 148 GW in 2014 to a record 242.5 GW in December 2025. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), for every degree rise in average daily temperature, peak demand now increases by more than 7 GW.

GETTY IMAGES

When demand spikes beyond a distribution company's (discom's) contracted supply, it has a few options – none of them cheap.

It can buy power on the spot market, typically through the Indian Energy Exchange, where prices can swing from ₹3.50 per unit in normal hours to ₹9-10 during peak slots. It can fire up expensive gas-based peaking plants or release stored hydropower. It can dispatch grid-scale batteries – BSES Rajdhani in Delhi has commissioned India's first commercial battery storage system for precisely this kind of energy arbitrage.

Or, as a last resort, it can impose planned power cuts, rotating blackouts across zones – what is known as load shedding – which disrupts livelihoods, damages industrial output, and is increasingly penalised by regulators.

Now imagine adding millions of induction cooktops to that evening peak window. Without intelligent management, mass electric cooking would steepen the evening peak, raise spot-market costs, and increase the risk of outages.

The question is not whether to electrify cooking, but how to do so without overwhelming the grid. That is where automated demand response enters the picture.

Can smart technology flatten the peak automatically?
OpenADR – Open Automated Demand Response – is a two-way communication standard that enables automated participation of smart thermostats, EV chargers, water heaters, and cooktops in demand response, ancillary services (frequency/voltage), and DER coordination. These devices can adjust their consumption automatically, without anyone having to lift a finger.

Born after California's 2002 energy crisis, its latest version plugs into modern energy systems using standard web protocols.

India has begun deploying it. Tata Power Delhi Distribution ran the country's first OpenADR pilot across 167 commercial and industrial consumers, achieving an average peak reduction of 14%. A study done of the pilot stated that peak shaving ability of close to 7% could be achieved if the technology were deployed across buildings in India.

Internationally, South Korea's AutoDR pilot reduced electricity use by 24%; such programmes typically pay for themselves within four years by deferring the cost of new grid infrastructure.

What discoms still lack is the full stack: OpenADR-compliant servers, smart-meter-embedded receivers, and aggregator platforms that can orchestrate distributed loads into virtual power plants.

Building this stack is essential – but it is only half the solution. The other half lies in turning households from passive consumers into active grid participants, while also upgrading household load capacity from 3 kW to 5 kW through investment in transformers and feeder infrastructure.

Can rooftop solar and neighbourhood trading take the pressure off the grid?
A rooftop solar panel paired with a battery can turn a household into a 'prosumer'– both a producer and a consumer. The solar panel generates power by day; the battery stores surplus energy; and that stored energy can be used in the evening to run the induction cooktop. This offsets precisely the peak that mass e-cooking would otherwise create.

A 2025 Australian national-grid study referred to a halving of peak load and reduction of grid reinforcement costs by 75% when residential electrification was combined with rooftop solar, batteries, and off-peak scheduling.

India's rooftop solar capacity is projected to more than double from 24 GW in 2026 to over 41 GW by 2030, boosted by the PM-Surya Ghar Yojana, which aims to provide 300 units of free electricity to 10 million households.

The real impact comes when surplus solar is not just stored but traded.

Peer-to-peer (P2P) energy trading allows households to sell excess electricity directly to neighbours through digital platforms, bypassing the traditional discom route.

India ran South Asia's first blockchain-based P2P solar trading pilot in Lucknow, led by the India Smart Grid Forum and Australia's Powerledger, under a regulatory sandbox approved by the Uttar Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission. Prosumers set prices, tracked trades in real time, and settled transactions through smart contracts. The result was a 43% reduction in the energy buy price compared with the retail tariff.

Following the pilot's success, Uttar Pradesh directed all its utilities to make provisions for P2P trading – a first for any State. In February 2026, the Centre announced a P2P facility under the India Energy Stack for Delhi and western Uttar Pradesh. If a cluster of homes on a single feeder can trade solar surpluses during the evening cooking hours, the local peak flattens, the discom avoids buying expensive exchange power, and the neighbourhood effectively becomes a micro virtual power plant.

What needs to happen, and how soon?
New York's All-Electric Buildings Act mandates that most new buildings under seven storeys be all-electric from January 2026, and taller buildings from 2029.

India has begun laying the groundwork. The Go Electric campaign and the National Efficient Cooking Programme target two million induction stoves. The Bureau of Energy Efficiency has launched star labelling for induction hobs; the PM-Surya Ghar scheme links rooftop solar adoption to household savings.

But a wider architecture is needed: redirect part of the estimated ₹40,000 crore annual LPG subsidy towards one-time capital support for induction cooktops. Expand Energy Efficiency Services Limited's (EESL) bulk-procurement model to e-cooking appliances. Mandate time-of-use tariffs for e-cooking and require OpenADR compatibility in new appliances and smart meters. Fund R&D on multi-pot induction technology designed for Indian cooking. And mandate all-electric construction for new residential buildings in Tier-1 cities.

The urgency is as much geopolitical as it is economic. Every dollar India spends on LPG imports goes through supply chains exposed to the Strait of Hormuz and the decisions of oil producers.

Electricity is different – you can generate it from solar panels on rooftops and store it in batteries we assemble here. We are talking about moving from imported fuel to power we generate ourselves. That is not just energy policy, that is sovereignty.

Urban India is the obvious place to start this shift. The grid works, smart meters are already rolling out, and rooftop solar pays for itself in cities. The technology is there. The numbers add up. We know how to manage the grid. The question is whether the policy framework will catch up before the next oil shock forces the issue.

(The author is an Energy and Emerging Technologies expert)

THE GIST

- Electric cooking is now cheaper than unsubsidised LPG, but shifting hundreds of millions of kitchens from flame to wire raises questions about grid stress and peak demand.
- Induction cooktops are far more efficient than LPG burners, yet mass adoption will require multi-pot appliances, smart demand response, and upgrades to distribution infrastructure.
- Rooftop solar, batteries, and peer-to-peer energy trading could help flatten evening peaks and reduce India's dependence on imported LPG.

As 10,796 remain untraced, HC directs police to implement SOP for handling missing person complaints

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Taking note that 10,796 persons, who went missing between 2020-2025, are yet to be traced, the High Court of Karnataka has directed the State government to give a report on effective implementation of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), evolved based on court's directions, for registration, enquiry and investigation of complaints of missing persons.

Justice Suraj Govindaraj issued the directions while disposing of a petition filed by a 65-year-old man complaining the 2024 action of the police in classifying as 'dormant' the First Information Report (FIR) registered in 2020 based on his complaint about his missing cousin.

During the hearing of the petition, the court had sought data of complaints of missing persons, including children up to the age of 17 from 2020-2025.

Besides submitting the data of missing persons, the Police Department also submitted a SOP, which was evolved compiling several circulars issued since 2007 on handling complaints of missing persons, following a direction issued in this regard by a Division Bench of the court in September 2025.

More girls untraced

From the data, the court noted that more number of girls in the age group of 13 to 17 went missing, particularly in 2025, and more number of these girls remained missing when compared to untraced boys in this age group.

As per the data, out of 1,26,508 persons reported missing between 2020-25, 10,796 people remain untraced. Of the total 71,699 women reported missing, 2,981 remained untraced and of the total 38,073 missing men, 6,470 remained untraced during this period. Among the children, 16,736 (4,864 boys and 11,872 girls) reported missing and 1,345 (386 boys and 959 girls) remained untraced.

Adolescent girls

The data also reveals that adolescent girls (13 to 17 years) account for the highest number among the missing children, with 3,769 went missing during this period. Also, the data discloses that the trace rates crashed considerably in 2025 with trace rate of men.

The court has now specifically asked the State government to file a report on establishment of district missing persons units, quarterly review report of supervisory committees, and digital portal for tracking of missing persons, sharing of information with the police of other States, and the number of missing persons cases currently under investigation, including the number of cases classified as active, dormant or traced.

Survey from April 1

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation will launch the National Household Income Survey 2026, a first-of-its-kind nationwide initiative to collect data on household income, expenditure, and living conditions. The survey will run from April 1, 2026, to March 2027. The exercise aims to fill a major data gap in understanding income sources and inequality across India.

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Notification No. 03/2025-26/HVS/CH/UBL Dated: 10.03.2026

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		Specialist	6 days/week	02:00 Hrs.	Rs. 67,000/- P.M.
02	Gynaecology	Specialist	6 days/week	04:00 Hrs.	Rs. 1,00,000/- P.M.

The Interested candidates should fulfil the following:

1.	Qualification/ Experience	PG Degree with three years experience or PG Diploma with five years experience.
2.	Age Limit	Between 30 to 64 years.
3.	In case any of the consultants are currently working in Government / Quasi Government organization, they have to submit a NOC from the concerned organization along with the application.	

The applications are to be submitted to the undersigned or can be mailed to **mdchubl@swr.railnet.gov.in on or before 21.04.2026 upto 06.00 p.m.** For further details contact office of the undersigned on all working days between 10.00 am to 6.00 pm or visit our website **www.swrindiarailways.gov.in.**

The details of the copies of the certificate in support of age, qualification, experience, etc., are to be enclosed with self attestation.

The selection will be done based on the documents submitted and no interviews will be conducted.

In case of any ambiguity in interpretation of any of the instruction/terms regarding the determination of eligibility, that interpretation by Managing Director/Central Hospital/Hubballi will be final and binding.

Medical Director, Central Hospital, Hubballi

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Office of the Executive Engineer
PWD Special Division
Ramanagara, Bengaluru South Dist.

No. EE/PWD/RMN Spl.Div./TND-26/2025-26 Date : 12.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tenders are invited in two stage system from the eligible **contractors for 01 work** of **Rs. 500.00 Lakhs** through e-procurement portal as per the Standard bid documents. The eligible contractors can participate in this tender through e-procurement portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Documents may be downloaded from **18.03.2026 to 02.04.2026**. Last date for submission of tender **02.04.2026 upto 16.00 hours.** Date of Pre-bid meeting **25.03.2026 at 11.30 Hours.** Date of opening of Technical bid **04.04.2026 (If possible) at 11.30 hours.** Tender Processing Fees, EMD as per E-Procurement. For more information contact the undersigned during Office Hours.

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(CIN-U04010KA2002SGC030438)

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPP portal)

BESCOM invites tender for the following Enquiry/Indent No.: **BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT1062.** Preventive and Breakdown maintenance of all makes of RMUs of all combination of both DAS and Non DAS RMUs in Davanagere Division area of BESCOM for a period of one year under Total Turnkey Basis.

For the above Works: Bid documents available from **17-03-2026**. Last Date for submission is **15-04-2026** at **17:00** hrs. Opening of Bid Document is **16-04-2026** at **17:15** hrs.

The Tenders can be obtained through KPP portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Aspiring bidders need to register on KPP portal. Further Bidders can take assistance with KPPP help desk contact numbers (080-46010000, 080-68948777) or email at support@eprochelpdesk.com. Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

For electricity related complaints Call: 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra Mobile APP

Sd/-
Chief General Manager(Ele.,)
Procurement, BESCOM

Government of Karnataka
KARNATAKA RURAL ROAD DEVELOPMENTAGENCY
Office of the Executive Engineer, Project division Raichur
e-mail: kn-rai@pmgsy.nic.in Web site : http://www.krrda.in

NO. EE/PDRCR/KKRDB/Short Term Tender/2025-26/935 Dt:13.03-2026

SHORT TERM TENDER-01

On behalf of Governor of Karnataka, EE Project Division Karnataka Rural Road Development Agency-Raichur, invites Item Rate Tenders in Raichur District through KPPP under KKRDB 2025-26 fund (As per guidelines of KW-3 & KW-4).

Calendar of Events of tendering is as follows:

1) EMD: As per KPPP portal **2) Name of work & Indent No:** KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT331, KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT332, KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT334, KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT335, KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT338, KRRDA/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT339 **3) Accessing the bid document on KPPP portal from:** 16-03-2026 **4) Last date for online submission of Technical Bids:** 30-03-2026 (17.00 Hours) **5) Opening of Technical Bid:** 01-04-2026 (10:30 Hours) **6) Opening of Financial Bid:** Will be intimated later on **7) Contractor Category:** As mentioned in KPPP portal **8) For Information:** Executive Engineer, Project Division, Raichur. **9) For Further details** https://www. kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- **Executive Engineer**
Project Division, Raichur

DIP/RCR/765/KSMCA/768/2025-26

University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore
NAAC A' Accredited, Estate Office, Naik Bhavan, GKVK, Bengaluru-560 065.

No. EO/SPO/kppp/23/2025-26 Dated: 14-03-2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through Kpp Portal only)

The University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru has invited Short Term Tender in the prescribed form as per Standard Tender Document KG-1 and KG-2, from the reputed firms for the procurement of Agricultural Equipment's.

The Blank Tender Documents can be downloaded from **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in. (1)** Last date and time for uploading the tender on **21.03.2026 upto 4:00 p.m. (2)** The Technical Bid will be opened on **23.03.2026 at 10:30 a.m. (3)** The Financial Bid will be opened on **25.03.2026 at 10:30 a.m.** in the Tender Committee Room of Estate Office. Further details can be had from the office of the undersigned during working hours and also refer UAS **website: www.usabangalore. edu.in. Help Desk +91-8046010000, +91-8068948777 support@eprochelpdesk.com.** The University reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons.

Sd/-
ESTATE OFFICER

DIPR/CP/R06276AAPL/2025-26

यूनियन बैंक ऑफ इंडिया भारत सरकार का उपक्रम
Union Bank of India A Government of India Undertaking
Regional Office: 2254, "Kousalya", 3rd Floor, South Wing, Vinoba Road, Mysore - 570 005

POSSESSION NOTICE
(See Rule 8(1)Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)

Whereas, the Undersigned being the authorised officer of **Union Bank Of India, Regional Office, Mysuru** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (Second) Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Sec 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (Act No. 54 of 2002) to repay the amount together with the future interest. till payment within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/s, Guarantor/s and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sec 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on below mentioned date.

The Borrower/s and Guarantor/s in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of the Union Bank of India, for an amount mentioned in the below column + interest and costs thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to the borrower to redeem the secured assets.

Union Bank Of India, Harohalli Branch, Kempaiah Building, Opp. To KSRTC Bus Stand, Harohalli, Ramanagara Dt.- 562112 Contact No:9321414581, Mail Id: ubin0814580@unionbankofindia.bank.in

Sl. No.	Name & Address of the Borrowers/Co-Borrowers/ Gurantors/Mortgager	Demand Notice Date & Amount	Total Dues	Description of the Immovable Properties	Date of Possession Taken
1.	1. **Mr. Swamy M (as He Is Deceased, His Legal Heirs)** A. **Mrs. Manjula M** W/o Late Swamy M B. **Master Yogaraju S** S/o Late Swamy C. **Miss Amrutha S** D/o Late Swamy 2. **Mrs. Manjula C** W/o Late Swamy, All are residing at Karadi Gudde Pipeline Road, Samrat Ashoka Nagara, Kanakapura Town Ramanagara - 562117	22-11-2024 & Rs. 16,56,099/-	Rs. 18,53,085-00 as on 28-02-2026 (Plus Interest & Other Charges thereon)	All The Part And The Parcel Of Residential House In The Name Of **Mr. Late. Swamy M.** Bearing No 77, CMC Khatha No 9020/7710/77, Situated At Eastern Side Of Mysuru Road, Pipe Line Road, Kanakapura, Ramanagara – 562117, **Measuring East-West 40 Feet, North-South 20 Feet, Total 800 Square feet, , Bounded By East-** Site No 76, **West-** Road, **North-** Site No 78, **South-** Road	13-03-2026

Date : 13-03-2026
Place : Mysuru
Sd/- Authorized Officer
Union Bank of India

Office of the Recovery Officer -I/II
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL, BENGALURU (DRT II)
Government of India, Ministry of Finance,
Department of Financial Services Debt Recovery Tribunal- II,
Karnataka (Bengaluru),
4th Floor, Telephone House Builiding Rajbhavan Road Bangalore - 560001

Form No. 14 (See Regulation 33(2))
DEMAND NOTICE

Notice under Sections 25 to 28 of the Recovery of Debts Due To Banks and Financial Instituions Act, 1993 and Rule 2 of Second Schedule to the Income Tax Act, 1961.

RC 422/2024 in OA No. 116/2021
CANARA BANK Vs SMT. YASHODAMMA

(CH) Canara Bank, Dasarahosahalli Branch, Dasarahosahalli, Bangarpet Taluk, Kolar District - 563 115, Karnataka. **.... Certificate Holder**

Vs

(CD 1) Smt. Yashodamma, W/o. Late G. D. Srinivasa Gowda, Dodduru Karappanahalli Village, Robertsonpet Hobli, Bangarpet Taluk, Kolar District - 563 162, Karnataka.

(CD 2) Sri. K. S. Devaraja Gowda S/o. Late G. D. Srinivasa Gowda, Residing at :Dodduru Karappanahalli Village, Robertsonpet Hobli, Bangarpet Taluk, Kolar District - 563 162, Karnataka.

(CD 3) Ms. Shaila , D/o.Late G. D. Srinivasa Gowda, Dodduru Karappanahalli Village, Robertsonpet Hobli, Bangarpet Taluk, Kolar Dist.- 563 162, Karnataka.

(CD 4) Sri. Praveen Kumar S., S/o. Late G. D. Srinivasa Gowda, Residing at :Dodduru Karappanahalli Village, Robertsonpet Hobli, Bangarpet Taluk, Kolar District - 563 162, Karnataka.

(CD 5) Sri. K. M. Ambarisha, S/o. K. Mallappa, Residing at :No. 403, 2nd Floor, Near Railway Gate, Bangarpet, Kolar - 563 162, Karnataka.

... Certificate Debtors

This is to notify that as per the Recovery Certificate issued in pursuance of orders passed by the Presiding Officer, DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL, BENGALURU (DRT 2) in **OA/116/2021** an amount of **Rs.4947286/-** (Rupees Forty Nine Lakhs Forty Seven Thousand Two Hundred Eighty Six Only) along with pendentellite and future interest @11.75 % compound interest monthly w.e.f. 21.12.2020 till realization in full and costs **Rs.106977 (Rupees One Lakh Six Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy Seven Only)** has becom due against you jointly and severally. **2**. You are hereby directed to pay the above sum within 15 days of the receipts of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993 and Rules there under. **3**.You are hereby ordered to declare on an affidavit the particulars of yours assets on or before the next date of hearing. **4**.You are hereby ordered to appear before the undersigned within 15 days of the receipts of the notice, for further proceedings. **5**. In addition to the sum aforesaid, you will be liable to pay:(a) Such interests as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the certificate/ execution proceedings. (b) All costs, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and warrants and other processess and all other proceedings taken for recovering the amount due.

Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on **27.05.2024.**

Sd/-Recover Officer
Debts Recovery Tribunal, Bangalore, (DRT 2)

Note: Attention is invited to Rule 16 of the Second Schedule of the Income Tax Act 1961 read with Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 which is reproduced below: "Rule 16 (1) Where a notice has been served on a defaulter under Rule 2, the defaulter or his representative in interest shall not be competent to mortgage, charge, lease or otherwise deal with any property belonging to him except with the permission of the Debt Recovery Officer, nor shall any Civil Court issue any process against such property in execution of a decree for the payment of money. (2) Where an attachment has been made under this Schedule any private transfer or delivery of the property attached or of any interest therein and any payment to the defaulter of any debt, dividend or other monies contrary to such attachment, shall be void, as against all claims enforceable under the attachment". 3) You are also liable to disclose your assets both movable and immovable to this Tribunal along with the Income Tax Returns of last 5 years.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public are hereby notified that my client Mrs. Kusumam Ramanujan, W/o Mr. A.R. Menon, is the owner of the Flat No.01, Ground Floor, E-PID No. 1467777640, situated at No.1303, 14th Cross, Binnamangala, Indiranagar 2nd Stage, Bengaluru – 560 038 and she has lost/misplaced the Original documents i.e., Allotment Letter dated 16.04.1975, Possession Certificate dated 24.07.1975, Conditional Sale Deed dated: 16.07.1976 (Document No. 1011/1976-77) and Sale Deed dated: 05.02.1990 (Document No. 3818/1989-90). An E-Complaint has been lodged on 13.03.2026 vide Lost Report No.2107842/2026. Any person who finds the said documents is requested to inform or return the same to the undersigned within 7 days from the date of this notice and the public is cautioned not to deal with the aforesaid Schedule property.

Rohit V.R, Advocate
No.22, 3rd Main Road, Kushal Layout,
C.V Raman Nagar, Bengaluru – 560 093.
Ph No :+91 96336 72642,
+91 9591039004

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the public that my client **Sri. PAWAN KUMAR BHANSALI** is intending to purchase the House property bearing Municipal No. 1, having E-Khatha-Swattu PID No. 6641357998, (Old PID No. 28-218-1, earlier Old No. 28/1), situated at Santhusapet, Bangalore, presently 4th Cross, PS Lane (Purna Sheshachar Lane), Bangalore-560053, comes under Bengaluru Central City Corporation Ward No. 109-Chickpet, measuring East to West 16 ft. 9 inches and North to South 55 Ft. 9 Inches totally measuring 933.8 sq. ft along with 2240 Sq. Ft. of R.C.C. Building from its owners Sri. M.N. RAM & others.

If anybody or any authority having any right, title, claims, interest or objections over the same, may file their objections with documents to below mentioned address **within 7 days** from the date of this public notice. Failing which my client will proceed to purchase the above said Property by treating no one has objections in respect of the said properties.

V.G. MURTHY, Advocate
ANANDA & HEGDE LAW ASSOCIATES
#76-77, Krishna Krupa Building, Ground Floor, 2nd Main Road, Sheshadripuram, Bangalore-20. Mob: 9738330783.

BENGALURU WEST CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Kengeri Division, Zone-1, RR Nagara Zone,
BBMP Office Building, CA No.3, 1st Main Road, Outer Ring Road, Kommaghatta Road, Kengeri Upanagara, Bengaluru - 560060.

No: EE/KEN/TEND/08/2025-26 Date: 16-03-2026

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT) - (SHORT TERM)
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

The Executive Engineer, Kengeri Division, Zone-1, R.R. Nagara Zone, BWCC, Bengaluru invites Tenders from eligible Tenderers for the Construction of Works detailed below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
	TWO COVER SYSTEM - (CALL-1)
1	Construction of Concrete Road & Drains at Herohalli Colony in Ward No. 28. **Approximated Amount Put to Tender (Rs. in Lakhs): 120.09, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 2,40,500/-**
2	Improvements of Roads and Drains at Bhoovi Colony, Mariyapanapalya in Ward No. 30, Nagadevanahalli. **Approximated Amount Put to Tender (Rs. in Lakhs): 200.14, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 4,00,500/-**
3	Improvements of Roads, Drains and Others Allied Works at SC / ST Colony in Ward No. 26 & 27. **Approximated Amount Put to Tender (Rs. in Lakhs): 120.09, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 2,40,500/-**
4	Improvements of Roads and Drains at SC / ST Colony, Ambedkar Nagara and Ullal Upanagara in Ward No. 29. **Approximated Amount Put to Tender (Rs. in Lakhs): 240.17, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 4,80,500/-**
5	Improvements of Roads and Drains at Gandhinagara and Mini Gandhinagara Surrounding Area in Ward No. 31, Bundemutt. **Approximated Amount Put to Tender (Rs. in Lakhs): 200.16, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 4,00,500/-**
6	Improvements of Roads and Drains at Arundathinagara and Surrounding Area in Ward No. 31, Bundemutt. **Approximated Amount Put to Tender (Rs. in Lakhs): 200.14, EMD Amount (in Rs.): 4,00,500/-**

Calendar of Events: 1) The Tender Documents can be downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 4.00 PM on 18-03-2026. 2)** Date of Pre Bid Meeting on **23-03-2026 at 3.00 PM in the Office of the Chief Engineer, Ideal Homes, Rajarajeshwarinagara Zone, Bengaluru - 560098. 3)** Last Date and Time for Receipt of Tenders: **01-04-2026 upto 4.00 PM. 4)** Date of Opening of Bids: **02-04-2026 at 4.30 PM.** Further details can be had from the above office.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Kengeri Division, Zone-1, BWCC.

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Hemu Gupta R/o G-15 GCN White Palms, Ramagondanahalli Borewell Road Whitefield, Bengaluru -560066 have changed my minor daughter's name from Riddhi to Riddhi Gupta for all purposes

I, SHOBHA.A, W/o Joseph Andrew.J, aged about 42 years, R/a No.29, Sandage Road, Frazer Town, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru-560005 have changed my name to Shobha Jeslin.J vide affidavit dt. 16.02.2026 before Notary Prasad Shetty K B, Bangalore.

I, Neeraja Alinkeel Ramesan W/O, Abhinav Puri R/o 2d 808 Isro Quarters, Jalahalli, Bengaluru-560013 have changed my name to Neeraja Ramesan for all purposes.

PUBLIC NOTICE

LOST AND FOUND

House number 377/137,Khata number-1106/450/377/137, belonging to, property registration deed.1)JPN-1-10696-2022-23.(Gift Deed).2)JPN-1-00052-2022-23. (Gift Deed).3)JPN-1-03921-2018-19. (Release Deed). Dated 13/02/2026 while going home from Konanakunte we lost Aboue documents. An e-lose FIR has been registered at Konanakunte Police Station. If anyone gets the above original documents, we request you to please provide them to us within 7 days. And contact this number Mobile number: 9901993394

BUILDING BLOCKS

GETTY IMAGES

How red marks liminal thresholds between life, death, sacrifice and renewal

Red ochre burials, ritual markings and myths across cultures show that red repeatedly marks liminal thresholds such as puberty, sacrifice and death; anthropologists argue that the colour functions as a technology of collective ritual and value, binding communities through shared symbolic acts

Satwik Gade

In 1823, English geologist William Buckland discovered a skeleton in a limestone cave in Paviland, southern Wales, which he identified as a prostitute from the Roman era, as the bones were coated in red ochre. Nearly a hundred years later, further studies, including that of grave goods, also painted in red, proved that the skeleton, which was dubbed "Red Lady of Paviland," was actually a man and that the burial was not from the Roman era but from around 33,000 years before present! Since then, archaeologists have found similar ochre burials across continents: at Qafzeh in present-day Israel, at Sungir in Russia, at Lake Mungo in Australia, in sites across Africa where it continues to the present day in the cosmetic ritual practices of women from the Himba community. As the evolutionary anthropologist Camilla Power has written, red ochre decoration of bodies and clothes is "a recurrent and structured feature of ritual behaviour." It marks a transition: puberty, which is an initiation into a new phase of life, or death, which is believed to lead the soul to an afterlife.

Victor Turner, the anthropologist of ritual, would later call such moments "liminal" – thresholds where ordinary hierarchies or naturally existing freedoms dissolve and a different order briefly governs. Power has argued that red pigment, especially in early human societies, likely functioned as a "technology of collective ritual," shaping people's behaviour long before administrative law or coinage existed. Across cultures, the administration of red – the mixing of ochre, the marking of bodies, the handling of blood – is often entrusted to those who themselves stand in liminal spaces. Ethnographic accounts from Siberia to the Americas describe ritual specialists whose gender expression does not align neatly with male or female roles. Many Indigenous North American traditions speak of Two-Spirit figures; Siberian shamanic traditions describe initiates who symbolically "die" and return altered; in parts of South Asia, hijra communities historically performed roles in rites of birth and fertility.

Archaeological work by Alison Watts demonstrates that red ochre from particular sources, in Middle Stone Age Africa, was transported across significant distances despite the local availability of similar pigments. Such a patterned preference indicates that red ochre's value was not reducible to its chemical function or to its colour value. Colour, texture and a socially charged location, as well as the human effort that went into sourcing, supplying and administering, were all seen as part of total meaning-making. Such long-distance networks bound communities divided by time and space into networks of total prestation, as Marcel Mauss called it, where society becomes bound across economic, aesthetic, legal, and religious spheres all at once.

In the Rig Veda, dawn (Uṣas) is described as *aruṇa*, flushed and radiant, the sky streaked with the colour of awakening sacrifice. In the Greek epics, Homer often calls the sea "oinops", meaning wine-dark, and likens battlefields to fields of spilled blood, where bronze and flesh meet in crimson blur. In the Hebrew Bible, the word *'adom* (red) shares its root with *adam* (human) and *adamah* (earth), binding soil, body, and mortality into one linguistic field. In ancient China, vermilion marked imperial gates and ritual seals, the cinnabar pigment associated with life-force and alchemical transformation. Roman writers describe the use of red ochre and cinnabar in triumphal processions and funerary rites, while in Mesoamerican codices, red pigments signal both sacrifice and renewal. Across these traditions, red signals thresholds: dawn and dusk, war and fertility, earth and blood, death and consecration.

Economic Anthropologist David Graeber, in his book, *Toward An Anthropological Theory of Value*, notes that in the earliest Brahmanas (texts that explain or provide commentary to the Vedas), red as a colour value becomes the basis for a ritual system of value exchange long before the emergence of commercial markets. The sages of these Brahmanas negotiate with gods and coax them into allowing red to become a colour of substitution so that gods see the sacrifice of red objects or animals as equivalent to the sacrifice of human life itself.

Goethe, writing millennia later, would describe red as the colour that approaches the eye with warmth and immediacy. Ochre, he noted, belongs to the "earth colours," close to bodily sensation, never fully abstract. Red does not recede like blue. It confronts. It occupies. In *Zur Farbenlehre,* which was published in 1810, Goethe describes an experiment where a spectrum is viewed through a prism at the edges of light and dark. He observes that when blue deepens toward darkness, it intensifies into violet; when yellow deepens toward darkness, it intensifies into red. For Goethe, red was the culmination of intensification, where light thickens toward matter.

(Satwik Gade is a Chennai-based writer and illustrator. This article is part of a series on the history and development of colours)

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Does the joint U.S.-Israeli military operation on Iran constitute a war, conflict, escalation, or campaign change? A quiz on lexicons and lives

Mohammed Hidhayat

QUESTION 1
U.S. President Harry S. Truman referred to his country's involvement in the Korean War as: a) humanitarian intervention b) sponsor of United Nations police action c) Gunboat diplomacy

QUESTION 2
After the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident, the U.S. Congress authorised President ____ to use military force in Vietnam through a joint resolution 'to promote the maintenance of international peace and security in southeast Asia'. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 3
The NATO bombed ____ (a former Balkan country) during the Kosovo War. The air campaign, framed as a 'humanitarian intervention' to prevent ethnic cleansing, left over 500 dead. Fill in the blank. Also, does NATO commit to the UN Charter?

QUESTION 4
The ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war began in 2014. In which year did Vladimir Putin launch a full-scale invasion, and what term did he use to describe the escalation?

QUESTION 5
The post-9/11 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) resolution enabled the War on ___. The law has been used by successive U.S. leaders to initiate 'counter-terror' activities, leading to more than 4.5 million deaths. Fill in the blank.

Visual question
President Barack Obama took the U.S. into war against X (country) as part of a NATO-led coalition. His Defence Secretary Robert Gates described the intervention as 'limited kinetic action'. Identify X, as well as the de facto military leader pictured in the mosaic, who was overthrown and later killed. NYT

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Jerry Lewis was born into a vaudeville family but it was not his christened surname. What was it? **Ans: Joseph Levitch**
2. Name Lewis' legendary partner from 1946 to 1956 with whom he dominated the entertainment scene. **Ans: Dean Martin**
3. Lewis is widely credited with developing and pioneering which film-making technology while directing '*The Bellboy*'? **Ans: 'Video assist' that allows filmmakers to view and distribute a video version of a take immediately after it is filmed**
4. In the 1963 classic '*The Nutty Professor*', what is the name of the title character? **Ans: Julius Kelp**
5. Which Oscar-winning director helmed '*The King of Comedy*', which had Lewis delivering an acclaimed performance? **Ans: Martin Scorsese**
6. What did Jerry Lewis sport to contort his face for his signature 'idiot' persona'? **Ans: False buck teeth**
Visual: Identify this legendary Indian actor whose style of comedy was largely inspired by Lewis. **Ans: Nagesh**
Early Birds: Dodo Jayaditya | Sourav Sangwan | Sadhan Panda | Piyali Tuli | Abhay krishan

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

What is the meaning and origin of the idiom "to pull the wool over someone's eyes"? (T. R. Gopalakrishna, Chennai)
In the old days it was common practice among men and women to wear wigs. It wasn't just people who were bald that wore them; even people with hair wore them. The richer you were, the more wigs you owned. Many of the fashionable wigs had lots of curls in them, and these curls reminded people of wool. Soon, wigs began to be called "wool". When you "pull the wool over someone's eyes", what you are really doing is pulling the wig that he/she is wearing over his/her eyes. And what would happen if someone pulled the wig that you were wearing over your eyes? You would be unable to see. You wouldn't know what is happening around you and it would be possible for the people around you to take advantage of the situation. They would be able to deceive you. And that's what the expression "to pull the wool over someone's eyes" means – to deceive someone.

Is the following question correct? "It appears dull, is it not?" (S. Balu Subesh, Pondicherry)
In India it is common practice to use "is not it" or "isn't it" as the question tag for all statements. One frequently hears in conversation questions like the following.
Jaya looked beautiful, isn't it?
Sachin has played many wonderful innings, isn't it?
You are coming to the party, isn't it?
The question tag "isn't it" has been wrongly used in all the examples. None of the sentences is grammatically acceptable. A native speaker of English would say:
Jaya looked beautiful, didn't she?
Sachin has played many wonderful innings, hasn't he?
You are coming to the party, aren't you?
The rule for using "isn't it" as the question tag is the following. The subject of the sentence should be "neuter" and the verb "is" should be either the main verb or the helping verb. Here are a few examples:
It's a nice day, isn't it?

What is the past tense of "swing"? (P. Suman, Nellore)
The past tense of swing is "swung".

What is the meaning of the word "savvy"? (K. J. Joseph, Kochi)
When you refer to a person as being "savvy", you are saying that the person has practical knowledge and ability. It is an informal word used mainly in American English. The firm hired Prakasham because he had a lot of savvy.

Is it ok to say, "I enclose herewith a list"? (V. Girija, Chennai)
Some people would argue that the word "herewith" is unnecessary in the above sentence. "I enclose a list along with the letter" is what they would prefer. The argument being that when a person encloses something, he/she is including it or sending it as part of the same letter. It is therefore redundant to use "herewith" after "enclose". But I found the following two sentences in dictionaries:
I enclose three documents herewith. (Cambridge Dictionary of English)
I enclose herewith two copies of the document. (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English)
Published in The Hindu on December 7, 1999

Word of the day

Chide:
censure severely or angrily

Synonyms: scold, reproach, rebuke

Usage: *The teacher chided the students for talking in class.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/chidepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /tʃaɪd/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

Govt. grants clearance to Chinnaswamy Stadium to host IPL 2026 matches

The formal clearance ends several months of uncertainty over the future of cricket at the stadium

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government on Monday officially cleared the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium for hosting IPL 2026 matches. The government's decision follows the multi-department expert committee submitting its assessment report, stating that the stadium has undergone satisfactory upgrades.

Now, with all decks cleared, the Chinnaswamy Stadium will witness its first major match after 10 months of lull on March 28. The home team Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) will start their title-defending campaign against Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the season's inaugural match.

The stadium venue was barred from hosting matches after the RCB victory celebrations on June 4, 2025, resulted in a stampede that killed 11 people. K. MURALI KUMAR

Drills

However, before the inauguration, the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) will conduct two drills on March 23 and 26 to ensure all security measures are in place, according to committee sources. The drills will mainly focus on ambulance movement. After the upgrades, all entry points have been changed, with stricter protocols put in place to ensure smooth and systematic movement of the crowd into the stadium. The venue now has wider passages, an extra layer of gates, and an increased number of gates, according to the committee members.

Fans will have to enter the first layer of gates, clear door frame metal detectors, and assemble in large holding areas. Subsequently, security checks and ticket verification will be conducted as fans pass through another layer of gates before finally entering the stands. However, some of these measures are temporary solutions deployed for the IPL, and the KSCA will undertake further upgrades after the tournament ends. According to the committee sources, the KSCA has submitted an extensive blueprint on the measures it will implement to conform to the suggestions listed in the Michael Cunha report.

"Based on Mr. Cunha's report, the committee drew up immediate measures that needed to be implemented to host matches. Now, the KSCA has satisfactorily completed all the required upgrades," a committee source told *The Hindu*. The formal clearance ends months of uncertainty over the future of cricket at the Chinnaswamy Stadium. The iconic venue was barred from hosting matches after the RCB victory celebrations on June 4, 2025, resulted in a stampede that killed 11 people. The change of guard at KSCA with former Indian pacer Venkatesh Prasad being elected president started the process of bringing back cricket to the stadium. The State Cabinet gave a conditional nod and set up a committee naming Home Minister G. Parameshwara as the chairperson.

The Home Department also set up a multi-department committee headed by M. Maheshwar Rao to oversee and assess the upgradation works.

The Home Department placed the responsibility for the final nod on the committee, which was asked to assess the upgrade works and submit a report.

The committee held a drill on March 13 and said the stadium was fit to host matches. Following this, the government has now given its final approval.

KSCA's statement

In a press statement, the KSCA extended its gratitude to the Karnataka government, the Home Department, and the expert committee.

"The KSCA looks forward to extending full cooperation and support to RCB in hosting the upcoming IPL matches in a safe, well-coordinated, and professionally managed manner, ensuring a memorable experience for cricket lovers and the sporting community," the statement said.

Annual exam-1 for SSLC students from tomorrow

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The annual examination-1 for SSLC students will be held from March 18, and a total of 9,02,889 students from 15,941 high schools have registered for the examination across the State.

On Wednesday, first language Kannada, Telugu, Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, English and Sanskrit exams will be held at 2,871 examination centres from 10 a.m. to 1.15 p.m. Like the previous year, the Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) will web stream the examination process from all centres, to prevent malpractices.

Tight police security will be maintained at all exam centres. All types of electronic devices, including mobile phones, smart watches, earphones are prohibited inside the centres. The use of mobile phones is prohibited for officers and staff involved in security work and examination duty. Only the chief of the examination centre will be allowed to use basic mobile phones without camera facility.

The KSEAB instructed students to follow the dress code. All Road Transport Corporations of the State will provide free bus service for students attending exams. They can travel free of cost by showing their ID cards and admission cards.

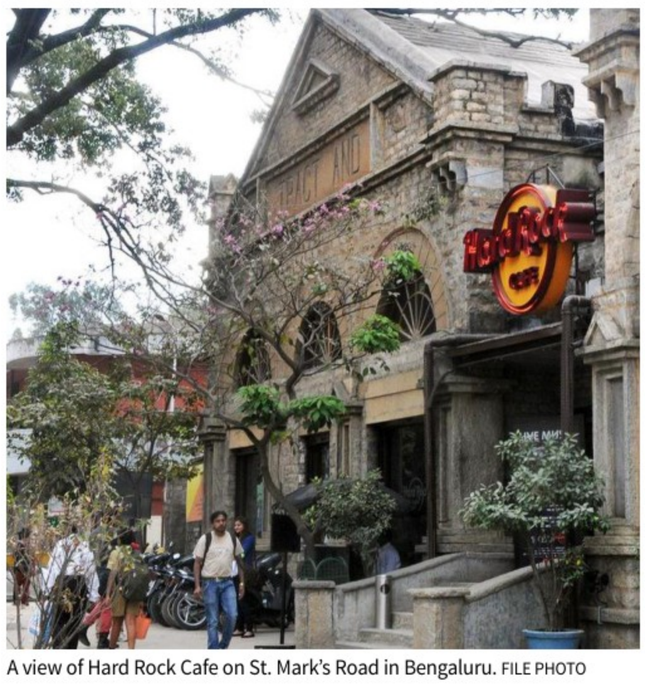
Hard Rock International announces closure of 10 of its outlets in India, including three in Bengaluru

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Hard Rock International has formally terminated its agreements with JSM Corporation and related entities, covering the right to operate all Hard Rock Cafes and Rock Shops in India with immediate effect.

In Bengaluru, the Hard Rock ran three outlets- on St. Mark's Road, at Gate 7 of Terminal 2 of Kempegowda International Airport, and in Whitefield- the first being the oldest and the most iconic.

Under this new development, 10 Hard Rock cafes will be closed. Besides Bengaluru, they are located in Chandigarh, Chennai, Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Kolkata, New Delhi, and Pune.


A view of Hard Rock Cafe on St. Mark's Road in Bengaluru. FILE PHOTO

However, The Hard Rock Hotel in Goa, which is connected to a different operator, would remain open, said The Hard Rock International in a statement. The Hard Rock International is owned by the Seminole Tribe of Florida, which operates its global hospitality, cafe, and casino operations. In December 2007, the first Hard Rock Cafe opened in Bengaluru and made its home in the iconic Bible Society building. Bengaluru was no stranger to rock pubs and had a great affinity for rock and roll bands, making it a perfect fit. Founded in the early '70s in London, the Hard Rock Cafe chain of restaurants became known for its decor.

The walls of the restaurant are adorned by rock memorabilia and the boast an impressive collection, such as Elton John's piano and John Lennon's handwritten lyrics to the song *Imagine*.

The one in Bengaluru houses costumes and guitars by artists such as Eric Clapton, Lou Reed and Madonna. In 2014, it even did a special exhibit called Treasures of Rock, where Indians got a chance to see Britney Spears' and Lady Gaga's legendary outfits.

Live performances

The restaurant had live performances every week. Homegrown bands such as Thermal and a Quarter, Allegro Fudge, One Nite Stand and Galeej Gurus have played unforgettable performances on the stage.

Nidhi R., a resident of Bengaluru for three decades now, said, "That building was always iconic. So, when the Hard Rock Cafe opened there in 2007 we were all very excited. We used to hang out there a lot especially on weekdays to enjoy the music."

Among the few

"Bengaluru once had vibrant rock-based cafes/pubs. This was among the last few standing for rock music, while Punjabi/Bollywood has taken over music space in pubs. Hardrock continued to offer platform for young bands. Recently, it hosted a tribute to Bryan Adams, which I sadly could not attend," said Mithuna, a rock aficionado of the city.

KRV opposes railway exams not being conducted in Kannada; to stage protest today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Opposing railway exams being conducted only in Hindi and English, the Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (KRV) has announced that it would disrupt the exams scheduled to be held in Bengaluru and Hubballi on Tuesday.

South Western Railway is holding its promotion exams for 295 posts, including 194 posts for Goods Train Manager (60% promotional quota) and Limited Departmental Competitive Examination (LDCE) (15% promotional quota) in the Hubballi Division on Tuesday.

Following protests earlier in 2008, the Railway Examination Board began holding exams in local languages as well, including Kannada. "But the board has gone back to its old ways and is holding these exams only in Hindi and English. We will not allow this exam to take place at any cost," said T.A. Narayana Gowda, president, KRV.

He said the KRV would hold a protest in front of the Railway Divisional Office near Krantiveera Sangolli Rayanna City Railway Station in Bengaluru on Tuesday. "We are ready to go to jail to protect the interest of Kannadigas," he said.

Timings
BENGALURU

TUESDAY, MAR. 17		
RISE	06:26	SET 18:30
RISE	05:03	SET 17:05
WEDNESDAY, MAR. 18		
RISE	06:25	SET 18:30
RISE	05:44	SET 17:57
THURSDAY, MAR. 19		
RISE	06:24	SET 18:30
RISE	06:23	SET 18:51

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	20
Mysuru	35	20
Bengaluru	33	22

Bengaluru Today
33°C The weather will be dry. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
33°C Morning will be slight cool with mist and haze. Day will be warm. Night also will be slight cool.

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THE HINDU
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Couple now living happily not a reason to quash child marriage case: High Court

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A criminal case registered under the provisions of the Prohibition of Child Marriage (PCM) Act, 2006, against the groom, his parents, and parents of a minor girl, cannot be quashed merely because the couple at present are living happily, the High Court of Karnataka has said.

"Criminal liability is measured at the moment of commission, not neutralised by the subsequent domestic peace. To accept otherwise would be to convert penal law into a matter of retrospective validation through sentiment. Parents who ought to bless their daughters with encouragement, education and empowerment, instead bless them with pre-

Temple authorities, marriage halls, and other establishments should display notices, stating that marriage of a girl below 18 years is prohibited

mature matrimony. If such conduct were to receive judicial indulgence, the eradication of child marriage would remain an illusive aspiration," the court observed. Justice M. Nagaprasanna made these observations while refusing to quash a case registered in 2021 under the provisions of the PCM Act against the groom, who was 27 at the time of marriage, his parents, and parents of the minor girl, who was 16 at the time of marriage.

Pointing out that the provisions of PCM Act does not hold responsible only the parents of the bride and the groom, the court said that when a marriage was solemnised in a temple, both the temple authorities and the officiating priest who conducted the ceremony may fall within the ambit of liability under the Act.

Likewise, the court said, when a marriage took place in a marriage hall or any other venue, its management and facilitators could not claim exemption from responsibility.

Display notices

Observing that "the pernicious practice of child marriage must be decisively uprooted", the court said that the Child Development Project officers should ensure that awareness of criminal liability was displayed at every venue, where marriages were ordinarily performed.

Temple authorities, marriage halls, and similar establishments should display notices, stating that marriage of a girl below 18 years was prohibited by law and attracted criminal consequences.

Even the print and electronic media, as vital instruments of public consciousness, must also play their role in sensitising society as eradication of child marriage was not merely a statutory goal, it is a Constitutional imperative, the court said.

No excuse

In the present case, the court declined to accept the claim of the accused that they were ignorant of the law, while pointing out that they were all working and they had registered the marriage after the girl completed 18 years. However, the court said that the ignorance of law was no excuse.

"The law protects childhood, so that it may blossom into informed adulthood. This court will not permit this protection to be diminished," the court observed while dismissing the petitions filed by the accused persons.

Deadline to file claims, objections to draft voters' list extended till March 20

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has extended the deadline for citizens to submit claims and objections to the revised draft voters' list for the upcoming elections to five city corporations under its jurisdiction to March 20.

Citizens were initially allowed to submit claims and objections between March 10 and March 16 after the ward-wise list was published on March 9. However, following a meeting with representatives of political parties and feedback from the public, the GBA sought an extension from the Karnataka State Election Commission, which subsequently approved the request. The list covers 369 wards across the five city corporations. According to the list, the elections will have 8,024 polling stations and a total electorate of 88,92,528 voters. Previously, the voter count stood at 88,91,411, according to the civic body.

During a recent meeting, the public as well as representatives from political parties pointed out that the seven-day window for filing claims and objections was insufficient and could make it difficult for officials to properly verify corrections.

Following these concerns, the commission allowed the extension to March 20, the officials said.

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Miffed over govt.'s failure to provide answers, Speaker adjourns House

Khader holds meeting with Chief Minister and officials; Siddaramaiah asks Chief Secretary to issue strict instructions to Secretaries of all departments to promptly provide replies to questions raised in the legislature

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a rare development in the State Legislative Assembly, Speaker U.T. Khader on Monday abruptly adjourned the House, expressing disappointment with the government for failing to provide answers to questions raised by members despite repeated directions.

The Speaker's action came after Ministers and departments failed to submit written replies to a number of unstarred questions submitted by members. Opposition members had been repeatedly complaining about this.

Legislative Assembly Speaker U.T. Khader making a point in the House on Monday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

IN THE LEGISLATURE

Only 84 replies

When the Speaker asked the government to table answers, Home Minister G. Parameshwara placed 84 replies against the 230 sought.

Expressing strong displeasure, Mr. Khader said he had issued clear directions from the Chair four times.

"This session is not meant for Ministers. It is meant for legislators who meet once in three months to raise issues concerning their constituencies. Only 15 starred questions are taken up during Question Hour. If a majority of unstarred questions go unanswered, why should members come to the House?" he asked.

Stating that there had been no improvement despite repeated warnings, Mr. Khader said, "Until the Ministers and the Secretaries concerned explain this lapse, I will not run this House." He went on to adjourn the proceedings.

Repeated warnings

Before adjournment, Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok said it was the fifth time the Speaker had warned the government over the issue.

Last week, Mr. Khader had cautioned Ministers saying: "Just because I speak softly, do not mistake it for my weakness." He had pointed out that only around 30% of unstarred questions had received replies.

Meeting with CM

After adjourning the House, the Speaker held a meeting with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and senior officials of various departments to resolve the issue.

Following the meeting, the Speaker resumed the proceedings, stating that the government would explain the reasons for the delay in furnishing replies. The House was later adjourned for lunch.

> If a majority of unstarred questions go unanswered, why should members come to the House?
>
> **U.T. KHADER**
> State Legislative Assembly Speaker

When the House met after lunch, Dr. Parameshwara assured on behalf of the government that strict measures would be taken to prevent recurrence of such incidents. "Adjourning the legislature session for such a reason is rare, perhaps the second or third time in the State's legislature history," he admitted.

He told the House that the Speaker had held a meeting with the Chief Minister, himself, Leader of the Opposition, and others soon after adjourning the House.

"Following your direction, the Chief Minister called the Chief Secretary and told her to issue strict instructions to the Secretaries of all the departments to provide replies promptly without fail to the questions put up in the legislature session," he said.

'Exemplary' move

Mr. Ashok described the Speaker's conduct of adjourning the House to express his displeasure as "exemplary" and pro-people. He appealed to him to warn the Ministers and initiate action against the guilty officials.

On X, Mr. Ashok said, "What unfolded in the Karnataka Assembly today is an unprecedented disgrace – a direct assault on the institution of the legislature."

In Council too

In the Legislative Council, Leader of the Opposition Chalavadi Narayanaswamy raised concerns over the absence of Ministers in the House and the delay in providing replies to questions raised by members.

Supporting the concern, JD(S) member S.L. Bhoje Gowda said, "Today, replies were expected for about 140 questions, but only around 40 questions received responses," he said, criticising the government.

State varsities suffering from 'serious chronic ailments', need long-term treatment: Sudhakar

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

State-run universities in Karnataka are suffering from what can be described as "serious chronic ailments", and the problems cannot be addressed with temporary remedies, Higher Education Minister M.C. Sudhakar told the Legislative Council on Monday.

Raising the issue under Rule 330, BJP member Talwar Sabanna said State universities had become centres of problems, alleging that they were plagued by caste-based issues and corruption and that their overall functioning had deteriorated.

Supporting the discussion, Congress member Puttanna said the condition of universities had been worsening for nearly two decades. "All universities have reached a stage of decline and resemble sinking ships. For the government, they have become white elephants," he said, urging that two or three days be set aside for a detailed discussion.

Leader of the Opposition Chalavadi Narayanaswamy demanded that nearly 14,000 vacant posts in universities across the State be filled at the earliest.

M.C. Sudhakar

Dr. Sudhakar responded that if such issues had been consistently brought to the attention of successive governments earlier, the burden of addressing them would not have fallen entirely on the present administration.

He said the rapid increase in the number of universities in the State had not been matched by adequate sources of revenue. "Universities are suffering from serious ailments, and such problems cannot be cured with a quick remedy. They require sustained treatment," he said, adding that the government had begun taking corrective measures in phases.

The Minister said he was open to holding a detailed discussion in the House on the condition of universities, without party or ideological considerations. However, he added that members should be prepared to accept the decisions taken by the government after deliberations.

Dr. Sudhakar also informed the House that an inquiry is under way into the expenditure of about ₹11 crore on the printing of marks cards at Gulbarga University. He said similar issues had been reported at Tumkur University and Kuvempu University, and inquiries had been initiated.

B.Ed. fee revision to be taken up this academic year

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The admission fee for Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) colleges in the State will be revised from the current academic year, Higher Education Minister M.C. Sudhakar informed the Legislative Council.

Replying to Congress member Madhu G. Made Gowda, the Minister said that the admission fee for B.Ed. colleges in the State had not been revised for the past 26 years. In view of this, the government has constituted a five-member State-level committee to examine the issue. A decision on revising the fee structure will be taken based on the recommendations submitted, he said.

'1.12L acres donated to waqf board, but it controls only 20,054 acres'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Housing, Waqf and Minority Welfare Minister B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan informed the Karnataka Legislative Assembly that more than 1.12 lakh acres had been donated to the waqf board over time, but currently the board has control over only 20,054 acres.

He said on Monday that 17,969 acres of waqf land in the State had been encroached upon by members of the Muslim community.

Replying to a question raised by Congress member M.Y. Patil during Question Hour, Mr. Khan said the Board lost 23,627 acres following implementation of the land reforms. He reiterated that Hindu temples had not encroached upon any Waqf Board properties.

B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan

The Minister said he had conducted several waqf adalats to address grievances and disputes related to illegal encroachments and land management, and efforts were being made to remove such encroachments.

Intervening during the discussion, Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok urged the government to stop alleged encroachment of government land by the Board.

He cited an instance in Chikkaballapur, claiming that land belonging to the school where M. Visvesvaraya had studied had been encroached upon by the Waqf Board.

Mr. Ashok also challenged the Minister to direct the Waqf Board to reclaim the land on which Windsor Manor is operating in Bengaluru.

Cemetery land

In a reply to another question by BJP member Prabhu B. Chavan, Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda said religious minorities are unhappy owing to scarcity of land for cemeteries.

He noted that Muslim and Christian communities bury their dead, and due to the inability to provide sufficient land for burial grounds in several parts of the State, members of these communities are expressing dissatisfaction with the government.

Illegal hoardings in ULBs set to attract cases and penalties

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Taking a stern stand against illegal hoardings that are an eyesore in urban areas of the State, the Legislative Assembly on Monday adopted the Karnataka Municipalities and Certain Law (Amendment) Bill that seeks to make it mandatory for those putting up hoardings, including on private properties, to take prior permission by paying the required fee to Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).

Piloting the Bill, Urban Development Minister Byrathi Suresh announced that criminal cases will be filed against those who violate the norms. The Bill seeks to make provisions for advertisements on par with the provisions of the Greater Bengaluru Governance Act, the Minister noted. The Minister expressed concern that the ULBs are losing out on revenues to the tune of over ₹100 crore as those who put up hoardings are not paying taxes to them, citing technicalities.

Once the Bill becomes a legislation, putting up any ad hoardings, including the flexes, without permission will attract punishment including penalties, he explained. According to him, different ULBs will have different fee structures for the hoardings. However, the revenues from these hoardings will be passed on to them.

Hoardings across ULBs will be mapped through drone surveys. There will be a separate fee structure for LED hoardings, he noted. The Minister made it clear that no plastic flexes or banners will be allowed in any of the ULBs.

'No proposal to raise fixed charge in domestic power tariff'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The State government on Monday clarified that there is no proposal before it to increase the fixed charge in domestic electricity tariffs.

Providing the information in the Legislative Council on behalf of Energy Minister K.J. George, Floor Leader N.S. Boseraju said that the proposal submitted for tariff revision did not include any recommendation to raise the fixed charge for domestic consumers.

Replying to a question from JD(S) member C.N. Manje Gowda, Mr. Boseraju said that any proposal for revising electricity tariffs has to be submitted at least 120 days in advance. The proposal submitted on November 29, 2025, did not contain any reference to increasing the fixed charge for domestic consumers, he said.

6 Escoms' losses

Mr. Boseraju informed the House that the six power distribution companies (Escoms) in the State together incurred losses of ₹4,516 crore during 2024-25. Of this, Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (Bescom) alone accounted for a loss of ₹2,802 crore.

He said the matter is currently before the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC), and the government is awaiting its decision on measures to offset the losses.

Maternity, childcare leave for women teachers to be approved within 15 days

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Teachers returning to duty after maternity leave can seek a transfer to a place of their choice during counselling

Applications submitted by women teachers seeking maternity leave, childcare leave, or a combination of both will be processed and sanctioned within 15 days by the competent authority, School Education and Literacy Minister Madhu Bangarappa told the Legislative Council on Monday.

Replying to BJP member Y.M. Satish, the Minister said the government is taking steps to ensure that requests related to maternity and childcare leave are addressed within a fixed timeframe. A policy will be formulated to ensure that applications for maternity leave are approved within 15 days of submission.

He added that women teachers returning to duty after maternity leave can seek a transfer to a place of their choice during counselling. This facility will be available until the child completes five years.

The Minister said a new category will also be introduced for maternity-related transfers. He added that the overall process of teacher transfers in the State will be completed before the start of the academic year.

To ensure that academic activities are not affected, guest teachers will be appointed during the maternity or childcare leave.

Responding to another question from BJP member S.V. Sankanur, the Minister said the government will examine filling vacant teaching posts in Pre-University (PU) colleges that have been separated from composite degree colleges. Appointments of lecturers in such institutions will be made based on workload.

He added that the government is also examining proposals related to the creation of new subject-wise teaching posts in such colleges. A decision will be taken after reviewing the proposals submitted by the respective managements.

He also said that physical education teachers will be given priority in the proposed recruitment of 15,000 teachers. At present, 3,361 posts in primary schools and 1,861 posts in high schools are vacant.

Government of Karnataka
KARNATAKA EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY
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E-mail: keauthority-ka@nic.in Website: https://cetonline.karnataka.gov.in/kea

No: ED/KEA/DCET/CR-01/2026 Date: 16-03-2026

DIPLOMA COMMON ENTRANCE TEST - 2026 TO DIPLOMA HOLDERS - FOR ADMISSION TO 2ND YEAR / 3RD SEMESTER ENGINEERING COURSES UNDER LATERAL ENTRY SCHEME (INCLUDING DIPLOMA WORKING PROFESSIONALS)

1) Government in its order No. ED 88 DTE 2022 Bangalore dated 14-07-2022, has allowed eligible Diploma holders to select any Engineering branch for Admission to 2nd Year / 3rd Semester under lateral entry scheme.
2) Further, the Government in its order ED 137 DTE 2023 dated 12-12-2023, has given permission to Diploma Working Professionals for admission to 2nd Year / 3rd Semester under lateral entry scheme. (Subject to issue of seat matrix).
3) Pursuant to the Government directions, KEA is inviting online applications from eligible Diploma Holders and Diploma Working Professionals for admission to 2nd Year / 3rd Semester Engineering Courses under Lateral Entry Scheme in **"Engineering Colleges"** for the year 2026-27.
4) Candidates including working professionals have to appear for the Diploma Common Entrance Test-2026 conducted by the Karnataka Examinations Authority to become eligible for admission to Engineering courses under lateral entry scheme.
5) For admission to **Architecture Course**, candidates should have appeared and qualified in NATA-2026 **(National Aptitude Test in Architecture)** conducted by the Council of Architecture. (Further the candidates must compulsorily register for DCET-2026, fill the application through online and pay the application fees).
6) Admission to Engineering Colleges to Diploma Working Professionals is subject to the seat matrix to be issued by the Government.
7) **Academic Eligibility:** The details of academic eligibility for all the above courses are available on the KEA Website: **https://cetonline.karnataka.gov.in/kea** The candidates are advised to verify the eligibility criteria before applying for any of the courses.
8) **Syllabus:** DCET syllabus issued by Department of Collegiate and Technical Education (ಡಿಟಿಇ 39 ಸಿಡಿಸಿ (1) 2024 – 28–01–2026) is hosted on the KEA Website for the information of the candidates. (Common to all Engineering Diploma Programmes)
9) As per the Government Notification No. **ED 155 TEC 2022 Dated: 19-04-2025** the Karnataka selection of candidate for Admission to Government Seats in Professional Educational Institutions (Amendment) rules, 2022 read the following Diploma courses under "Schedule-I" **1. Dip NTTF (Tool and Dye Making) & 2. Dip NTTF (Electronics) as deleted.**

i	Commencement of Registration and filling of Application-cum-verification module	**From 12.00 Noon on 17-03-2026**
ii	Last date to fill the application online	**03-04-2026 upto 11.59 PM**
iii	Last date to pay the application fees - (online)	**04-04-2026 upto 6.00 PM**
iv	Downloading of Admission Tickets for DCET-2026 from KEA website	**07-05-2026 Onwards**

DCET-2026 Examination Time Table

Date / Day	Syllabus - (Common to all Engineering Diploma Programmes)	Timings	Marks
23-05-2026 SATURDAY	a) Engineering Mathematics b) Statistics & Analytics c) IT Skills d) Fundamentals of Electrical and Electronics Engineering e) Project Management Skills	**2.00 PM To 5.00 PM (3 HOURS)**	**100**
	Descriptive Kannada Language Exam (4th Standard Level) for Horanadu and Gadinadu Kannadiga candidates (EXAM CENTRE ONLY IN BANGALORE)	**10.30 AM To 11.30 AM**	**50**

NOTE:
Online application is application-cum-verification module and there will be no physical verification. The student entries pertaining to School Study, Kannada Medium, Caste Category, Annual Income etc will be verified through SATS / Revenue Department Web service. The candidates are advised to fill all the details carefully and upload the necessary documents.
NOTE: Visit KEA Website **https://cetonline.karnataka.gov.in/kea/** for more details.

Sd/-
(H.Prasanna, IAS)
Executive Director

DIPR/CP/6299/Adverto/2025-26

BJP releases first list of candidates for Kerala polls

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Bharatiya Janata Party released its first list of 47 candidates for the upcoming Legislative Assembly election in Kerala on Monday. Among the prominent candidates, party State president and former Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar will contest from Nemom , while former Union Minister V. Muraleedharan will seek mandate from Kazhakuttom.

Union Minister of State for Minority Affairs and Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, George Kurian, will contest the polls from Kanjirappally.

Former BJP State presidents K. Surendran and P.K. Krishnadas will contest again from Manjeswaram and Kattakada, respectively.

'New paramedical admission norms may trigger crisis'

Sharan Prakash Patil says the NCAHP had stipulated that only students who have passed II PU in the science stream would be eligible for admission to paramedical courses

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil expressed concern that new admission norms prescribed for paramedical courses by the National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions (NCAHP) could trigger a fresh educational crisis and even lead to the closure of several institutions in Karnataka.

Responding to members in the Legislative Council on Monday, the Minister said the commission had stipulated that only students who have passed II PU in the science stream would be eligible for admission to paramedical courses. The rule has created apprehension among institutions in the State, he said.

Minister Sharan Prakash Patil speaking in the Legislative Council session on Monday.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Mr. Patil pointed out that in Karnataka, thousands of students had traditionally opted for paramedical diploma courses after completing SSLC. However, the new regulation makes completion of II PU with science subjects mandatory for admission.

"We have discussed the issue with the chairperson of the commission and requested that the rules be simplified," the Minister said.

'Will hit students'

The issue was raised by Congress member Ivan D'Souza, who said the new eligibility condition would adversely affect students aspiring to pursue paramedical courses.

He said NCAHP had written to the University Grants Commission on January 2, directing that admission to paramedical courses across the country be restricted to students who have completed PUC with science subjects. The directive is proposed to be implemented from the 2026-27 academic year.

NEET issue

On another issue, Mr. Patil clarified that the introduction of the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) had not reduced the number of medical seats available to the State. He said 15% horizontal reservation is available for rural students, and the government would hold discussions with the Higher Education Department to explore additional measures to support students from rural areas preparing for the examination.

Mechanic murdered in front of his children over financial row

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 45-year-old mechanic was brutally murdered in front of his children over a financial row in Wilson Garden on Sunday night.

The video of the murder was recorded by a passerby which went viral on social media, drawing public outrage. The victim has been identified as Rasheed Pasha, a vehicle mechanic who had recently started a garage. According to police, three persons attacked him with a cricket bat and a blunt weapon, on Bada Makan Road, killing him on the spot.

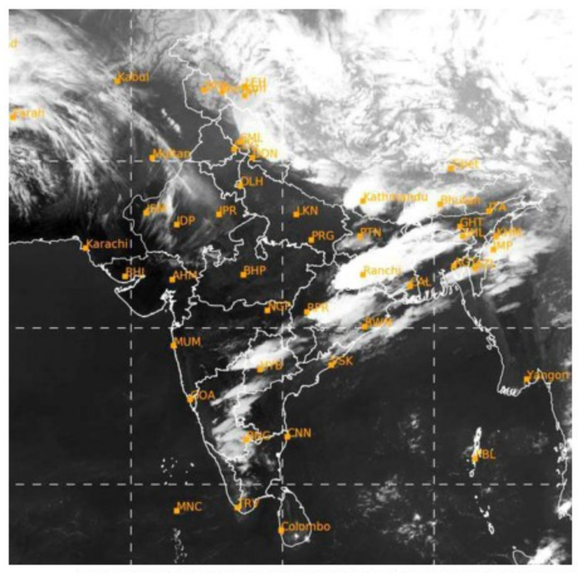
Acting swiftly, the police arrested the three persons for the murder. Probe revealed that the victim and the accused are owners of adjacent shops. They had a difference over the ongoing construction of concrete roof for their shops. The accused had demanded ₹50,000 from the victim for the construction of the concrete roof and the victim refused. This led to a heated argument and led to the murder on Sunday, a police officer said.

The accused attacked the victim with a cricket bat. He banged his head to the road, and the victim sustained severe head injuries and died due to excessive bleeding.

However, the victim's brother, Nadeem Pasha, alleged that his brother had been killed for not paying "hafta", protection money, which the police ruled out.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Tuesday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya. Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Sikkim, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal and Kerala

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	32.8	23.0	Kozhikode	—	35.6	27.0
Ahmedabad	—	37.7	22.6	Kurnool	—	37.4	24.7
Aizawl	1.8	30.4	13.6	Lucknow	—	33.1	19.6
Allahabad	—	36.0	18.4	Madurai	—	37.0	24.4
Bengaluru	—	32.8	22.0	Mangaluru	—	33.7	23.9
Bhopal	—	35.2	20.0	Mumbai	—	31.7	23.0
Bhubaneswar	—	32.2	22.6	Mysuru	—	34.6	19.8
Chandigarh	1.6	26.4	12.3	New Delhi	0.4	32.2	17.4
Chennai	—	33.9	24.3	Patna	—	35.2	22.8
Coimbatore	—	35.6	22.6	Port Blair	—	31.5	26.8
Dehradun	25	28.5	11.4	Puducherry	—	32.2	24.0
Gangtok	2	19.7	10.5	Pune	—	37.1	20.4
Goa	—	33.0	23.5	Raipur	—	37.7	25.0
Guwahati	34	28.2	16.8	Ranchi	—	33.4	18.0
Hubballi	—	36.0	18.0	Shillong	—	20.0	13.0
Hyderabad	—	36.0	23.5	Shimla	12	15.5	4.4
Imphal	—	25.5	14.0	Srinagar	16	14.7	5.3
Jaipur	—	33.9	18.6	Thiruvananthapuram	—	34.7	25.0
Kochi	18	32.2	25.2	Tiruchi	—	35.7	24.4
Kohima	—	20.0	11.0	Vijayawada	—	33.9	22.6
Kolkata	—	34.4	22.8	Visakhapatnam	—	31.5	24.7

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.82	..94	60	... 105	...174	
Bengaluru	...4	..16	38	... 164	...142	
Chennai	...6	..13	51	 17	40	
Delhi	.14	120	40	... 161	...158	
Hyderabad	...2	9	47	 74	...100	
Kolkata	.11	..96	21	 40	58	
Lucknow	.13	..41	26	 58	...103	
Mumbai	.14	..70	16	 33	88	
Pune	..—	..32	16	 90	...105	
Visakhapatnam	.31	..45	14	 37	96	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Byrnihat, Assam recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 212 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Kohima, Nagaland recorded a healthy AQI score of 15

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Kannada writer Amaresh Nugadoni wins Akademi award

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Kannada writer Amaresh Nugadoni, 66, has been conferred the Sahitya Akademi award for his short story collection, *Dada Serisu Tande*. This is his fifth short story collection. Four of his stories have been adapted into films.

He is known for capturing themes of drought and human suffering in the Kalyan Karnataka region and using the local dialect in his writings.

Amaresh Nugadoni
FILE PHOTO

The description of the arid landscapes of Kalyan Karnataka in his works, the mountains and the plains of various districts and the lives of the common people after the fall of the Vijayanagar empire are considered unique to Kannada literature.

He is known for bringing out issues of caste and class discrimination, as well as social justice.

Prof. Nugadoni, who is recuperating in the hospital after procedure for a heart ailment, said he was very happy to be selected. Prof. Nugadoni said it was an honour for the Kannada language.

Born Amaresh Halemane in Nugadoni village in Raichur district, he adopted the name of his village as his second name. He studied at various places in Raichur district and pursued his M.A. in Kannada from Gulbarga University in Kalaburagi.

Literary influence

The biggest literary influence in his life was to come in Raichur, where he met polyglot poet and ghazal writer Shantarasa Hemberalu.

He served as a lecturer in Akkalkot in Maharashtra, Bidar and Raichur, before joining the Hampi Kannada University. He retired as a professor in 2022. His short story *Savari* was made into the multiple award-winning film *Kanasemba Kudureyaneri* by Girish Kasaravalli. It was also screened in several film festivals outside India.

The story *Neeru Tandavaru* was brought to screen by Aasif Kshatriya, while *Daivakke Modalu Sharanembevu* was adapted by G. Rangaswami.

The story *Dhare Uridare* was made into *Vaghachi Pani* by Natesh Hegde. Four of his stories have been staged as plays.

AGRICULTURE PRODUCE MARKET COMMITTEE VIJAYAPUR

No:Amd:APMC(V)/Dev/1742/2025-26 Date:16.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION (THROUGH KPP PORTAL)

1) Name of Work: Providing infrastructure facilities for Dry grapes, Onion & Lemon at Toravi market of Apmc Vijayapur UNDER RIDF-31 SCHEME-2025-26
INDENT NO:- APMC/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT877
Amount put to Tender Rs. 25,07,28,847=08 (Excluding GST). E.M.D. Amount Rs.25,10,000=00
TENDER HAS BEEN CALLED THROUGH KPP PORTAL TO EXECUTE THE ABOVE WORK. PRE-BID MEETING AND TENDER DISPUTE RESOLUTION **DATE: 06-04-2026** AT 11.30 AM **VENUE:** ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE MAIN MARKET YARD, VIJAYAPUR, LAST DATE & TIME FOR SUBMISSION OF TENDER IS **18-04-2026** UP TO 5.30 PM, FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT DURING OFFICE HOURS AND VISIT THE WEBSITE https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- Secretary, APMC Vijayapur **Sd/- Administrator, APMC Vijayapur**

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/812/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

VISVESVARAYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED

(A Government of Karnataka enterprise)
EE,VJNL, UBP, Division No.01, Kadur
e.mail I.D: eeubpdvn1@gmail.com Ph: 08267-295207
No.EE/VJNL/UBP/D-1/Kadur/Tender-7Corrigendum/2025-26/1115 Date:12.03.2026

CORRIGENDUM NOTIFICATION- TwoCover System
(Through KPPP Portal only)

Reference: This office Tender Notification No: 1048 Dated:12.02.2026

On behalf of the Managing Director, VJNL, Bangalore, "Percentage Basis" Tenders are invited by the Executive Engineer, VJNL, UBP Division No.1, Kadur 577548 from eligible tenderers for the work Indent No: VJNL/2025-26/OW/WORK INDENT467 and VJNL/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT472 through KPPP portal vide above mentioned reference. Now due to technical reasons below mentioned events are postponed and rescheduled as mentioned below. Sl.No. D. Particulars : The last date for submission of completed tender documents through e-portal. First in KPP Portal Date: 13.03.2026 Upto 17.30 hrs Now to be read as 20.03.2026 Upto 17.30 hrs Sl. No. E. Particulars : Date & time of opening of Technical Bid (cover- 1) by Executive Engineer, VJNL, UBP, Division No-01, Kadur Date:16.03.2026 At 11.00 hrs Now to be read as Date: 23.03.2026 At 11.00 hrs

Note: All other terms and conditions of tender mentioned in the reference shall remain unchanged except the calendar of events.

Sd/- Executive Engineer VJNL, UBP Division No.01, Kadur
DIPR/ckm/ksmca/25-26/195/2029

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client is desirous of purchasing all that piece and parcel of adjacent agricultural lands bearing (a) Survey No. 61/5 measuring 1 Acre **("Item No.1")** (portion of old Sy.No.61/2) (b) Survey No. 61/6 measuring 21 Guntas **("Item No.2")** (portion of old Sy.No.61/2), in all measuring 1 acre 21 guntas, both situated at Dasarahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, more fully set out in the Schedule below and hereinafter referred to as **"Schedule Properties"** from present owner Mr.L.Prakash S/o. Lakshmaiah C., residing at No.64, 8 th Main, G.M.Palya, Sri Krishna Nilaya, New Thippasandra, Bangalore **("Owner").**

Any person or persons asserting any right, title, interest or claim in the Schedule Properties or any part thereof, in any manner whatsoever or having any claim against the Schedule Properties or the documents thereof or against the Owners or objecting to such transaction with my clients, should write to the undersigned **within ten (10) days** from the date of issuance of this notice with all documentary proof on which they are basing and asserting their rights with regard to Schedule Properties or any part thereof, after which period my client shall proceed on the basis that there are no claims of whatsoever nature with regard to the Schedule Properties.

SCHEDULE

Item Nos.	Sy. No.	Actual Extent A	Actual Extent G	East	West	North	South
				:Agricultural lands:			
1.	61/5	01	00	Survey No. 61/3	Survey No. 60	Survey No. 61/4	Survey No. 61/6
2.	61/6	00	21	Survey No. 61/3	Survey No. 60	Survey No. 61/5	Survey No. 61/7
Total		01	21				

Sd/- **NAGESH A, Advocate**
No.G-10, Mezzanine Floor, SNS Chambers, No.239,
Sankey Road, Sadashivanagar, Bangalore – 560080. Mob : 9343836529.

KARNATAKA STATE AGRICULTURAL MARKETING BOARD
No.16, 2nd Rajbhavan Road, Bengaluru - 560001
Ph: 080-22867369, e-mail: cgmksamb@gmail.com

Tender No: KSAMB/ACCTS-FD/Tender/AUCTION/4587/2025-26 Dated: 16.03.2026

e-TENDER CUM e-AUCTION NOTIFICATION

Karnataka State Agricultural Marketing Board, Bengaluru is inviting e-bidding through e-procurement portal from Nationalized Banks for placing of **Rs.50.00 Crores** (Rupees Fifty Crores Only), **Rs.30.00 Crores** (Rupees Thirty Crores Only) & **Rs.15.00 Crores** (Rupees Fifteen Crores Only) for One year in Fixed Deposit (Non-callable). The detailed information can be obtained from **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** portal vide Indent No: **APMC/2025-26/AUCTION114** The last date for participation Date: **23.03.2026.**

Sd/-
Chief General Manager
KSAMB, Bengaluru
DIPR/CP/SSC/6293/2025-26

ZOO AUTHORITY OF KARNATAKA
Office of The Executive Director & Deputy Conservator of Forests, ShriAtalBihari Vajpayee Zoological Park, Kamalapur
HosapeteTqVijayanagarDist, Karnataka State
Email: eddcfabvzp81@gmail.comOff: 6366971705

Tender No: ABVZPK/Outsource/e-Tender//04/2025-26
Dated: 13.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

On behalf of the Member Secretary, Executive Director and Deputy Conservator of Forest Department of Zoo Authority of Karnataka (ZAK) has published Tender notification for Outsourcing the staff for a period of 2026-27 one year at ShriAtalBihari Vajpayee Zoological Park, Kamalapura Conditions & regulations.

Indent No: ZAK/2025-26/SE0062. **Estimated Cost (in Rupees):** Rs.1,32,32,691.00. **EMD (in Rupees):** Rs.6,62,000.00

Tender shall be submitted in e-procurement portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in (Dept.selection: Zoo Authority) last date for submission of tender is **06.04.2026** within **4.30 PM**. Opening of Technical bid on **07.04.2026**within **4.31PM**. And Financial bid on **09.04.2026** at **11.35 AM** Respectively.

More details can be obtained from the office of the under signed during office hours. Any amendment of modifications in tender notification will be published on e-procurement portal.

SD/-Executive Director & Deputy Conservator of Forest, AtalBihari Vajpayee Zoological Park KamalapuraHosapeteTq, Vijayanagar Dist.
DIPR/Vijayanagar/2025-26/KSMCA/RO No/594

KARNATAKA URBAN WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD
Water & Waste Water Learning Centre & Theme Park,
Doddaballapur Main Road, Next to Sheshadripuram
First Grade College, Yelahanka, Bengaluru-560106.
Ph: 080-29620505 e-mail: themepark.kwb@gmail.com

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPPP only)

1) No.KWB/CE/AEE/WWLC/Lawn/113/2025-26, Date: 13.03.2026.
Name of the work: Annual Maintenance Contract for Maintenance of Lawn and Garden at Water & Waste Water Learning Center (Theme Park), Karnataka Urban Supply and Drainage Board, Yelahanka, Bengaluru under Annual Maintenance of Water & Waste Water Learning Center (Theme Park). **Service Indent No. : KUWSDB/2025-26/SE0116.**

For further details may be obtained through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- CHIEF ENGINEER (D&M), KUWS & D BOARD, Bengaluru
DIPR/CP/YC/6279/2025-26

ನಗರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಹುಣಸೂರು ಮೈಸೂರು ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ
E-mail : ka.hunsur.cmc@gmail.com
Fax: 08222-252250 office Phone: 252048
ಸಂ: ಹುನಕಾ/ಜೆಇ(ವಿ)/ನೀ.ಸವಿ/ಸಾನಿ/ಟೆಂಡರ್–08/2025–26 ದಿ: 13.03.2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

(https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ)

ಹುಣಸೂರು ನಗರಸಭೆ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ನಗರಸಭಾ ಅನುದಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ನೀರುಸರಬರಾಜು ವಿಭಾಗ ಮತ್ತು ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿ ಶಾಖೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂದಿಸಿದಂತೆ ನಿರುಸರಬರಾಜುವಿಭಾಗಕ್ಕೆ ಅವಶ್ಯವಿರುವ ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಆದಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಪೂರೈಸಲು, ಕಛೇರಿಯ ಉದ್ದೇಶಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಅವಶ್ಯಕವರುವ ವಾಹನಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಸಿಕ ಬಾಡಿಗೆ ಆದಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಪೂರೈಸಲು ಮತ್ತು ನೀರುಸರಬರಾಜು ವಿಭಾಗದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ/ದುರಸ್ಥಿಕೆಲಸಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂದಿಸಿದಂತೆ ನೋದಾಯಿತ ಮಾನವ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿಗಳಿಂದ ಮತ್ತು ನೋದಾಯಿತ ಅರ್ಹ ವಾಹನ ಸರಬರಾಜುದಾರರಿಂದ ಹಾಗೂ ಸೂಚಿತ ದರ್ಜೆಯ ಸಿವಿಲ್/ವಿದ್ಯುತ್ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯು.–1/ಟೆಂಡರ್ ನಿಯಮಗಳ ಅನ್ವಯ 1999 ಹಾಗೂ 2000ರ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕ ಕಾಯ್ದೆಗೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟು ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಆಸಕ್ತಿಯುಳ್ಳ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ದಾರರು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಿಂದ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಷರತ್ತು ಹಾಗೂ ದಾಸ್ತಾವೇಜನ್ನು ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡು ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: **1)** DMA/2025-26/SE7500, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.20.16 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು, ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: **2)** DMA/2025-26/SE7499, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.106.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು, ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ **3)** DMA/2025-26 /WS/WORK_INDENT56410, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ. 14.80 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು, ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: **4)** DMA/2025-26 /WS/WORK_INDENT 56409, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.5.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು, ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: **5)** DMA/2025-26 /WS/WORK_INDENT56411, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.3.80 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು **1)** ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕಡೆಯ ದಿ: 30.03.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5.30 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ. **2)** ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿ: 01.04.2026ರ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.30 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ ಅಥವಾ ಮುಂದೆ ಸೂಚಿಸುವ ದಿನಾಂಕದಂದು ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು. ಸೂಚನೆ:. ಕಾರಣಾಂತರಗಳಿಂದ ಮೇಲೆ ತಿಳಿಸಿದ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಿನಾಂಕಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ಇತರೆ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳಾದಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ, ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಸೂಚಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಮಾನ್ಯ ಆಡಳಿತಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಹುಣಸೂರು ಹಾಗೂ ಮಾನ್ಯ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು, ಮೈಸೂರು ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ಮೈಸೂರು
ಸಹಿ/– ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಹುಣಸೂರು
DIPR/DDMYS/1834/KSMCA/1033/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department. Office of the Executive Engineer Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal. Phone & Fax No : 08539-220054 email: eemidnkst@rediffmail.com

No:EE/MI&GWDD/Koppal/PB/TP/2025-26/5589
Dated:13/03/2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER

The Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal district invites tenders from the eligible tenderers registered civil contractors as per standard bid documents KW-6 on KPP portal for 02 no. of tender works pertaining to Raichur district The Approximate amount for the mentioned works Ranges between Rs.2100.00 Lakhs to 3400.00 Lakhs. Two cover tender procedure as per rule 28 of the KTTP act shall be followed.

For more information the contractor can contact the under signed during office hours and all information regarding tenders can be had from website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ The tender documents can be downloaded from the above website address on or after **18-03-2026**. Last date & time for receipt of tender is **04-04-2026** time 17.30 hours, Pre bid meeting will be held on **25-03-2026**, 11.00 Hours at division office koppal, Date & time for opening of technical bid **06-04-2026** time 11.00 hours, date and time for opening of financial bid **08-04-2026** time 11.00 hours (If technical bid sanction is accorded by the competent authority).

Sd/-Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal.
DIPR/Koppal/757/KSMCA/2025-26

TOWN MUNICIPAL CORPORATION RON 582209
Dist.: Gadag Phone: 08381-267234
E-mail: itstaff_ulb_ron@yahoo.in
Website: www.ronatown.mrc.gov.in

SI No/TMC Ron/CMIDP/CR- /2025-26 Date: 16-03-2026

Tender Announcement (Through K.P.P Portal)

The Municipal Corporation on behalf of the Governor of the State of Karnataka, in accordance with the Karnataka Transparency Act-2000, invites tenders from eligible Contractors/Suppliers registered under KW-3 "K.P.P. Portal_Tenders are invited from registered eligible Contractors/Suppliers. The tenders are advertised on the "K.P.P Portal" website at **www.ronatown.mrc.gov.in/Tenders**, or **https://kppp.gov.in/** The tender has been advertised as per the conditions.

Sl No.	Indent No.	Amount (in Lakhs)	Reserve
1	DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT52995	84.00	SC
2	DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT52996	100.00	Other
3	DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT52997	100.00	Other
4	DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT52998	74.30	ST
5	DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT52999	65.00	CAT-I
6	DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT53000	65.70	Other
	Total :	489.00	

Note: Any amendments regarding the tenders will be published only on the KPP portal.

Details of the fixed dates:

1) **Date: 04-04-2026 till 5-30 PM.** Applications for tender forms can be submitted on KPP Portal. 2) Date of opening of technical bid : **06-04-2026**. 3) Date of opening of financial bid : **08-04-2026.**

Sd/- Chief Office TMC RON **Sd/- Administrator TMC RON**
DIPR/GADAG/708/DESHPANDEPUBLICITY/2025-26

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

IN MEMORIAM

DOB: 17.09.1960 DOD: 17.03.2024

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Poll bugles

Questions on the SIR apart, the ECI does well to limit the election cycle in April

The people of at least one State will heave a sigh of relief now that the schedule for five Assembly elections – all in April – has been announced. The elections in West Bengal will be held in two phases, unlike the eight in 2021. Spread across so many phases for security reasons, the extended campaigns only turned ugly and vituperative, with the parties stoking passions through personal attacks and communal rhetoric. It is to the credit of the Election Commission of India (ECI) that it has decided to limit the Bengal election to just two phases, which should hopefully focus the contestation and discourse on more pertinent issues. That said, these elections are the second set of polls being held in States/Union Territories (UT) where the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process has been completed. The ECI has yet to provide satisfactory explanations for the anomalies that arose during the SIR. These include a lowered gender ratio in most States except Tamil Nadu and an abnormally high number of deletions compared to the estimated adult population. The deletions are expected to affect short-term migrants and married women. Unlike Bihar, where the electoral variables were decisively in favour of the ruling National Democratic Alliance making the SIR a relative non-factor, it could affect West Bengal, where the sword of Damocles still hangs over 60 lakh people regarding their voting eligibility due to 'logical discrepancies' in their applications, which are still under review by judicial officers.

The other States and UT, barring Assam, that go to the polls also bring in a distinct element to them unlike most other Indian provinces. Here, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is less of a force and the elections will be decided based on the performance of State governments and local/regional variables. The entry of the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, led by actor Vijay, and the staying power of the small but steady Naam Tamizhar Katchi party will complicate the battle in Tamil Nadu, even if it is being primarily fought between the two alliances led by the ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and the opposition All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. In Kerala, the Left Democratic Front faces an uphill battle to counter anti-incumbency, with a resurgent Congress-led United Democratic Front challenging it, alongside a BJP seeking to expand its limited footprint. In Assam, the contest is between the two fronts led by the national parties, the ruling BJP and the Congress. The Congress's inability to rope in the Raijor Dal led by Akhil Gogoi into its front is a failing that could hurt it in a contest that BJP Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma seeks to frame less as a referendum on governance and more around crass identity politics. This kind of a largely bipolar contest is also expected in Puducherry, where the ruling regional party, the All India NR Congress, in alliance with the BJP, will take on the Congress-DMK-Left-VCK coalition.

Beginning and end

The state must allow its citizens the right to die with dignity

The incontrovertible nature of both life and death makes them fiendishly difficult to legislate or adjudicate. Interfering with the very elemental beginning and end points of life must seem daunting. Nothing else can explain the long dalliance that laws have had with euthanasia to facilitate the intentional ending of a life, globally. In India, last week, the Supreme Court, in a landmark decision, approved the withdrawal of life support, including artificial nutrition and hydration, for Harish Rana, who went into a persistent vegetative state (PVS) following a head injury over 12 years ago. Invoking the constitutional idea of dignity, the Court observed that it would not be compatible with temporarily keeping alive a terminally ill patient who is brain dead or in a PVS, only because it is possible to leverage technological advancements to do so. This forces a life of indignity: patients endure a slow, agonising death. As the end of life approaches, a loss of control over human faculties denudes life of its meaning, it added. The Court went on to expand the right to live with dignity under Article 21 to encompass the right to die with dignity. In India, in the absence of legislation on the subject, the courts have consistently had to engage with the euthanasia question over the years. The Smt. Gian Kaur vs The State Of Punjab (1996) case might have set off the trend, but the debate entered the public realm with the Aruna Shanbaug petition in 2011. The Court, in this instance, did not allow for euthanasia as the nurses caring for her demurred, but went on to lay down guidelines for withdrawing or the withholding of medical treatment or medical support to allow for natural death. In 2018, a Supreme Court Constitution Bench held that the right to die with dignity is a fundamental right.

Besides benefitting Harish Rana in the instant case, the judgment will undoubtedly make it easy for terminally ill patients and their families 'to let go'. As technology advances in leaps and bounds, more life-preserving hacks will become available to all who are able to pay for them but could erode the patient's dignity. The judgment is intended to introduce compassion into end-of-life care for patients with unalterable medical conditions. The concept of a living will, a legal document empowering individuals to state their preferences for medical treatment in situations where they become incapacitated, vegetative or are unable to communicate, again endorsed by the Court, must also be popularised. In the grey zones, it is the law that can give people the courage to take the right call.

Neighbourhood diplomacy and its West Asia challenge

Suhasini Haidar

With the sinking of the Iranian warship, *IRIS Dena*, in the Indian Ocean, by the United States on March 4, the war in West Asia came home to South Asia. With each passing day, the war that began on February 28 has reached South Asian homes in a number of ways – disrupting the availability of daily necessities, travel, trade, food and fuel for cooking and transport, fertilizers, and the safety of citizens in the West Asia region.

Approximately 25 million South Asians live and work in West Asia, including 10 million Indians, five million Pakistanis, between five to six million Bangladeshis, two million Nepalis, and significant numbers from Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and the Maldives. Afghans – between five to eight million – are refugees in Iran. In addition, Indians make up about 15% of the population of seafarers, or crew aboard merchant ships worldwide, along with other South Asians, all of whom are at risk of harm, particularly those positioned around the Strait of Hormuz, where Iran has weaponised access. As New Delhi formulates its next steps in the war, it is necessary to consider not only what it will mean for the whole region but also its own ties with each neighbour.

India's stance could raise eyebrows

It is important to recognise that New Delhi's posture at the start of the war – when U.S.-Israel strikes killed Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and much of his immediate family – has been out of step with most of the region. Bangladesh and Pakistan issued statements condoling Khamenei's death almost immediately, the Maldives condemned the U.S.-Israel attacks on Iran and Iran's counter-attacks equally, and the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister offered his condolences. In contrast, it took South Block five days to send Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri to the Iranian Embassy.

It took another week for the Ministry of External Affairs to express "grief" over the killing of more than 150 students and teachers at a school for girls abutting a naval base in Minab. Even in the wider region, a statement by Foreign Ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) criticised U.S. and Israel for "initiating" attacks, and subsequent attacks by Iran.

This is less about optics and more about India's – and South Asia's – cultural values: the killing of Khamenei, an 86-year-old religious leader of a state, violated international norms, regardless of how his policies were viewed. That India's statements in the following days condemned Iran's retaliatory strikes without ever criticising U.S. or Israeli actions against Iran and Lebanon is an anomaly.

It is possible to explain the initial reactions in light of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Israel two days before the strikes, and his statement in the Knesset that India would stand with Israel "in the moment and beyond". But as the horror of the escalating war mounts and the Iranian regime demonstrates its resilience, there is a need to calibrate a more balanced response. India's traditional position, of building strong bilateral ties with every country in West Asia, without taking sides in regional fault lines has always kept it in a position of trust and goodwill; this was proven during Mr. Modi's outreach to Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian for the passage of Indian ships in the Strait of Hormuz.

In addition, the U.S.'s unabashed pride in bombing *IRIS Dena* near Sri Lanka without even attempting to help the surviving sailors has come as a shock to many in the region. It is admirable that the Indian Navy immediately assisted the Sri Lankan Navy in the rescue operations, and that both Delhi and Colombo offered safe harbour to other Iranian military ships in the area. Yet, the Indian Navy's failure to express its condolences for the deaths of the sailors who had recently been its guests at India's multinational naval exercise MILAN 2026 and the International Fleet Review in Visakhapatnam in February, is difficult to understand.

Economic, regional and maritime security

Going forward, India must reassure its neighbours – other than Pakistan, which it has no relationship with at present – that it remains cognisant of their concerns. As energy shortages deepened, New Delhi received requests for petrol and diesel from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives; landlocked Nepal and Bhutan may follow suit if the situation worsens. India must plan ahead to avoid a repeat of 2021, when it had to halt vaccine supplies to its neighbourhood for several critical weeks to deal with the crisis caused by the spread of the delta variant of SARS-CoV-2. Subsequently, India's "Vaccine Maitri" programme did much to ease those memories, and enforced the need for an "all of region" approach to such situations.

Since 2020, South Asia has been has been buffeted by several crises: COVID-19, supply chain blockages from India-China tensions along the Line of Actual Control, sanctions affecting grain, oil, and urea amid the Russia-Ukraine conflict, fluctuations in remittances due to constant flare-ups in West Asia, the impact of the Trump administration's tariff policy on the region's labour-intensive apparel and fashion industry, and seafood exports, and the growing shadow of Artificial Intelligence on jobs in a region with a restless young population.

It is not a coincidence that many of India's neighbours have seen youth protests erupt, and new governments installed as a result – an example is Nepal's election on March 5 which brought its first Gen-Z-led government to power.

The conflict will test India's regional influence and strategic balance

The Bharatiya Janata Party's poll losses in the general election in 2024, which resulted in Mr. Modi's first minority government within a coalition, are also attributed to the disaffection of unemployed and underemployed youth. The changes have impacted India's diplomacy, as the Modi government has had to amend its more muscular neighbourhood policy to engage leaders elected on these mandates and who are less beholden to India.

India must also recognise that its position as "net security provider" in the region has been challenged by the U.S.'s sinking of the *IRIS Dena*, which cuts more deeply given their joint membership of the Quad (the strategic forum comprising the U.S., Japan, India, and Australia).

At their last meeting in July 2025, the Quad Foreign Ministers issued a statement reaffirming their commitment to "peace and stability" in the Indo-Pacific region and declaring that they "strongly oppose any unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo by force or coercion", a reference to China. With the U.S. behaving unilaterally, India must move to strengthen its own coalitions in the maritime region, including the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), the Colombo Security Conclave, and the Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) so that it is not caught unawares in the future. South Asia requires more regional trade, connectivity and energy sharing platforms, along with more conversations on regional security, as each country in the subcontinent is a stakeholder.

On the global stage, India's position as Chair of the Quad requires it to host a summit this year – when U.S. President Donald Trump is to visit India. But India's immediate priority should be to convene a Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting to ensure better communication and chart a more stable course for the maritime region in view of the West Asia war.

New Delhi must restore the balance

On the other side of the global North-South divide, India is also due to convene the BRICS Summit in 2026 – while bringing current rivals and BRICS members Iran and the United Arab Emirates to the table may be difficult given current tensions, New Delhi's diplomatic skills must be exerted in forging consensus for a BRICS statement that also highlights South Asia's economic and security concerns. Having momentarily abandoned its balancing act between the U.S.-Israel and Iran, it is time for India to restore the balance in its West Asia policy. New Delhi's traditional position on the tightrope may be tense, but it gives a more beneficial vantage point from which to steer the future of its people and those across the wider neighbourhood.

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Belém as a test of a new model of forest finance

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The real test is whether it will protect the communities protecting the forest

The climate summit that was held in Belém, Brazil in November 2025, refocused renewed global attention to a difficult but unavoidable truth: protecting tropical forests requires more than ambitious pledges – it requires a fundamental shift in who holds power over those forests. As world leaders gathered in the Amazon city, the signature initiative was Brazil's Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF), or a finance mechanism presented as a paradigm shift in global conservation. Yet, amid the flurry of announcements and diplomacy, persistent tensions revealed that major challenges remain around participation, equity and accountability.

The difference

The TFFF proposes to compensate countries for maintaining standing forests, not just for avoiding deforestation. As reported, the Fund has already secured more than $5.5 billion in initial commitments, including a $3 billion pledge from Norway. Unlike many past funds, it is not structured purely as a donation vehicle. Rather, it is set up to generate returns and reward long-term forest conservation. Critically, at least 20% of its performance-based payments are reserved for indigenous peoples and local communities, whose daily stewardship plays an outsize role in keeping forests intact.

This allocation is not symbolic. According to the Rainforest Foundation US, indigenous and local communities were deeply involved in co-designing the facility. Across months of global consultations, more than 400 community leaders shared their perspectives. The model offers something new: not only financial support but also formal decision-making power. Yet, important gaps remain. For instance, indigenous representatives do not have voting rights on the main governing bodies of the Fund, raising questions about how genuinely inclusive decision-making will be.

Even as the TFFF proposes this inclusive architecture, many civil society groups have voiced their strong criticism. The Global Forest Coalition (GFC) described the fund as "colonialistic", arguing that it benefits intermediaries rather than forest peoples. Its worry was about a mechanism built around market logic and financial returns that may not address the root structural causes of deforestation, such as agribusiness expansion, oil and mining projects, and large infrastructure, all of which continue to drive forest loss. According to the GFC, rewarding standing forests without curbing exploitative activities risks creating a superficial conservation narrative.

Compounding this, some critics argue that the payment rate, around $4 a hectare in earlier proposals, is inadequate given the manifold ecosystem services that forests provide. There is a risk that national governments could absorb most of the funds, while communities on the ground may see little benefit. The success of the TFFF, therefore, depends not just on its size but on strong delivery mechanisms and rigorous, locally accountable institutions.

Conservation overlooks power imbalances

Amid these debates, Brazil has taken steps to buttress access. On the sidelines of COP30, it announced a dedicated digital platform to help forest countries navigate TFFF eligibility. The platform, developed with partners such as the UNDP, FAO, WWF and the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities (GATC), promises technical assistance, capacity building and peer collaboration. It is stated that independence from the TFFF's governing structures is meant to prevent conflict of interest while focusing on inclusion and knowledge sharing.

This structure matters because forest conservation has long overlooked deep power imbalances. For many indigenous groups, protecting the Amazon is not just an environmental fight but also a struggle for survival. This was clear at COP30, where indigenous protesters entered the venue demanding territorial rights, insisting that their land cannot be treated as a commodity. Many felt excluded from decisions that directly affect their homes.

Land rights remain central to this debate. Ahead of COP30, the Forest and Climate Leaders' Partnership (FCLP) renewed its Forest and Land Tenure Pledge, committing $1.8 billion from 2026 to 2030 to support indigenous, local and Afro-descendant communities. The pledge was a key part of the Belém agenda, reflecting scientific warnings that the Amazon's future remains at risk without secure land rights.

Civil society groups also stressed that climate justice and nature protection cannot be separated. Conservation International called COP30 a chance to secure long-term funding for the Amazon, supporting forest protection, community governance and sustainable livelihoods. They warned that sidelining indigenous leadership weakens both climate action and human rights.

Yet, financing alone cannot counter pressures from infrastructure, agribusiness and extractive industries. The protests in Belém showed that money means little without real shifts in power. Without strong accountability, funds risk flowing to intermediaries while local communities continue to face land loss and displacement.

Beyond the money

The TFFF's launch in Belém is a major step, but its credibility depends on whether it actually transfers power to forest communities rather than reinforcing old hierarchies. For indigenous peoples, forests are home and survival. The real challenge is in ensuring that finance reaches them in forms they control, turning promises into lasting protection. A future of genuine conservation will depend on whether global finance strengthens community rights instead of replicating old patterns of exclusion.

The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Parliamentary proceedings

Reams have been written about the proceedings in Parliament. Yet, the 'temple of democracy' often resembles a marketplace. Questions are vital to governance as they expose flaws, but voices are frequently muted when they are raised. Listening appears to be on the wane, while the ruling party and the Opposition behave like bitter adversaries. Disagreements need not be uncivil. By watching their representatives quarrel instead of seeking solutions, citizens can only reflect on the irony of such conduct in Parliament.

Balasubramaniam Pavani,
Secunderabad

Election conduct

It was ironic to hear the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India speak about democracy ahead of the Assembly elections. The CEC was right in saying that pure electoral rolls are the bedrock of any democracy (Inside pages, March 16). But the conduct of elections must also be free, fair, and impartial, with complete transparency at every stage. Democracy in elections will be meaningful only if the Election Commission of India recognises that it is an independent institution.

D. Sethuraman,
Chennai

The Election Commission of India appears to have ensured that its own considerations take precedence over those of the electorate in the election dates it has announced. In Tamil Nadu, the polling date of April 23 falls in one of the hottest phases of the year. The day is also considered auspicious for weddings, and several temple kumbabishekams are scheduled to take place. In 2023, poll dates in Rajasthan and Mizoram were revised due to local considerations.

A.V. Narayanan,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Importance of sex education in academia

Sexuality, intimacy, and mental health are closely linked yet heavily stigmatised, resulting in a culture of silence; shame and fear surrounding sex and intimacy can exacerbate mental health issues. The WHO has stated that "immense suffering can occur when people lack bodily autonomy, control over their fertility or the freedom to experience safe, consensual and satisfying sexual relationships". In 2024, the Supreme Court emphasised the need for comprehensive sex education programmes in order to promote open discussions about intimacy and sexual health.

As German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) fellows between Germany and India, the authors' classroom experiences of teaching about the diversity of human sexualities, in both contexts, found that there is a need to resist and challenge the marginalisation, invalidation and disenfranchisement of lived intimacies in higher educational institutions. Deeply ingrained social stigmas, silence and taboos about intimate relationships are perpetuated in academia, evidenced by the miniscule number of courses and discussions on the topic. Academia often promotes a culture of resistance, fear and anxiety over informed exchange and empowering discourse, particularly in the light of increasing student suicides in India. By prioritising a biomedical approach as well as majoritarian norms, higher educational spaces disregard the dimension of pleasure and the impact of socio-cultural and oppressive factors on intimate experiences.

Annika Strauss

Lecturer, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Muenster, Germany

Sudarshan R. Kottai

Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Palakkad, Kerala

Lack of proper vocabulary

In India, the mental health curriculum is often found to be heteronormative and cisgendered without accounting for sexual marginalisation and human diversity. 'Sexuality' is limited to heterosexual dysfunctions, erasing topics such as consent and sexual politics, framing it as a medical issue alone. Complex lived realities and the structural violence faced by queer people are erased, inhibiting the development of cultural and structural competence required for effective clinical practice. As a consequence, sexual minorities often experience institutional discrimination and inadequacies in the provision of support when they access counselling services. With psychologists being increasingly appointed in universities to deal with suicide and mental health problems in India, such ethical and epistemic gaps fail to reckon with oppressive institutional contexts. It diminishes the capacity of mental health professionals to initiate transformative structural change oriented on sexuality, gender and relationship equality.

Exercises to open up

Addressing sensitive topics such as mental health, violence, and intimacy in higher educational settings comes with particular challenges. A workshop and film screening that took place at the University of Münster in Germany featuring a filmmaker who uses unconventional pornography as a form of sex education highlighted some of the difficulties. While appreciating the effort to tackle the issue, students found themselves uneasy during the discussion. Was it appropriate to open up about one's own experiences, or was it safer to maintain a detached, impersonal, and abstract tone, as is often expected in academic settings?

The authors' interactions with students in India and Germany highlighted the importance of creating safer and accountable spaces when teaching sensitive topics. To achieve this, innovative approaches at the beginning of each class can help. Instead of diving straight into theory and methodology, icebreaker exercises and small-group discussions encourage students to share their personal perspectives on topics. By answering questions like 'What does intimacy mean to you?', students can connect the course material to their own lives and experiences. Such an approach emphasises the need for instructors to foster a classroom environment that builds trust, rapport, and open communication among participants.

Inclusive classrooms

Education should harness the diversity within classrooms and transcend mere knowledge transfer and workforce training, aiming instead to cultivate critical thinking and awareness. This is particularly urgent in today's context, where anti-democratic movements seek to erase and marginalise the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals, promoting a narrow and exclusionary view of sexuality and intimacy. Furthermore, it is crucial to address the growing mental health concerns affecting young people, who face immense pressure from family expectations, societal demands, and the weight of multiple global crises. In 2025, the Supreme Court sought responses from the government on integrating transgender-inclusive comprehensive sexuality education into school curricula. In the same year, the Court issued pan-India guidelines to address suicide and mental health issues among students in which gender and sexual orientation figured as reasons for discrimination at higher educational institutions. By creating diversity-aware and compassionate learning environments, students can develop the tools to navigate contemporary challenges and create a more inclusive, equitable, and just world. Fostering allyship and care communities within educational institutions should take precedence over short-term fixes such as hiring more mental health professionals or facilitating isolated events or workshops, without creating a sustained conversation or support system.

By creating diversity-aware and compassionate learning environments, students can develop the tools to navigate contemporary challenges and create a more inclusive, equitable, and just world

Gaining inroads into each other's bastions

Both the national parties, while tightening their hold, are keen to look beyond

STATE OF PLAY

Ashok Kumar
ashok.kumar@thehindu.co.in

The Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) picks for the two seats to the Rajya Sabha that went to polls in Haryana on March 16 were predictable, as it was driven by caste calculations. The elections were necessitated due to BJP leaders – Kiran Choudhry, a Jat, and Ram Chander Jangra, belonging to the Backward Classes (BCs) – completing their respective terms in the Upper House. However, this time, the BJP chose to nominate Sanjay Bhatia, a Punjabi, in an effort to consolidate its non-Jat vote bank, and to tighten the grip over its regional bastion, the 'GT Road belt', a swath of constituencies along the National Highway (NH)-44. The Congress too stuck to its Jat-SC-Muslim formula, nominating Karamvir Boudh, who is from a Scheduled Caste (SC).

Even as the two national parties, which had finished neck-and-neck in the 2024 Assembly polls, vie to firmly hold on to their vote banks and regional strongholds in the State, they have also unleashed political battles to make inroads into each other's traditional bastions.

Long-term game plan

After falling short of the majority mark in the previous Assembly election, the Congress undertook a major restructuring of its State unit last year. It appointed Rao Narender Singh, a Backward Class leader, as its State party president – the first such appointment in over two decades, replacing a SC leader. In his appointment, the Grand Old Party is aiming to not just woo the

BCs, the core vote bank of the ruling BJP led by Chief Minister Nayab Saini, who also belongs to the BCs, but is also trying to breach the saffron party's south Haryana fortress – the Ahirwal belt. The 'Ahirs' or the 'Yadavs', categorised as BCs in Haryana, and largely settled across the Gurugram-Rewari-Mahendragarh belt, have supported the BJP since 2014, playing a key role in the party's record three consecutive wins in the State elections. With the appointment of Mr. Singh, an Ahir leader, the party hopes to cash in on the political rivalry between the BJP's two Ahir stalwarts, Union Minister of State Rao Inderjit Singh and Haryana Environment Minister Rao Narbir Singh, to re-establish itself in the region. Of the 32 district presidents appointed by the Congress last year, 10 were from the Backward Classes, signalling the party's shift away from its Jat-centric voter base towards a more inclusive caste coalition.

The BJP, for its part, thriving on a non-Jat and BC vote bank, has gradually increased its political outreach towards the Meo Muslims, who are the dominant group in at least five Assembly seats such as Nuh, Punhana, Ferozepur Jhirka, Hathin and Sohna. Over the past decade, Hindutva organisations have increased their activities in the Meo-Muslim dominated Nuh district. In December 2025, a 10-day 'Vande Bharat Ekta Yatra' traversed through 200 villages in Nuh. Touted as an apolitical march to raise issues around poor infrastructure, it bore an unmissable saffron stamp with several local BJP leaders taking part in it. The BJP has also been trying to lure prominent local political leaders from other parties as part of its long-term strategy to find a foothold in this region.

Regional players

Reduced from 31 MLAs in 2009 to just two in 2024, the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) has declared to take the fight to former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda's bastion Rohtak, the epicentre of Jat politics in Haryana. It held a rally in Rohtak last September to commemorate the 112th birth anniversary of late Deputy Prime Minister Chaudhary Devi Lal in order to reclaim its lost political ground in the Jat-dominated Sonipat-Rohtak-Jhajjar belt. The INLD, led by Abhay Chautala, hopes to turn around its political fortunes by winning back a portion of the Jat and Muslim vote bank, which has now shifted to the Congress. As part of its strategy, the party is set to hold a State-level youth conference in Jind's Narwana on March 23 and organise several meetings in Nuh.

Aiming to re-engage with its agrarian base, mostly the Jats, the Jannayak Janta Party too, led by Ajay Chautala, held a rally in the agricultural region of Hansi. Hansi is considered a bastion of the saffron party.

Even as political parties in the State seek to chip away at each other's vote banks, the BJP stands to benefit the most with the tug-of-war between the two Chautala-led factions and the Congress for the Jat vote bank, who form one-fifth of the total electorate.

Are 40 out of 100 children malnourished in Gujarat?

Data indicates that the statement is true and that there is a higher burden of malnutrition among the tribal communities of the State

DATA POINT

Devyanshi Bihani

On March 12, child malnutrition in Gujarat became the subject of a debate in the Legislative Assembly. During a discussion on the budgetary demands of the Women and Child Development Department, Congress MLA Jignesh Mevani stated that, "despite..BJP government ...[having] more than 150 seats and 28 years of rule, only one figure comes on record, that 40 out of 100 children are malnourished. A very large section of them are tribals."

Women and Child Development Minister Manisha Vakil responded that the Opposition was relying on figures from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS 2019-21) and asked members to "update your knowledge". Ms. Vakil told the Assembly that, according to the Poshan Tracker system, "only 11.4% of children in Gujarat" were malnourished as of January 2026.

Different methods

The Poshan Tracker and the NFHS cannot be directly compared as they use different methods. The NFHS is a sample-based household survey conducted on a representative population, while the Poshan Tracker is a real-time monitoring system under Mission Poshan 2.0 that records growth data for children registered at *anganwadi* centres. "There are several issues in using Poshan Tracker data to counter NFHS figures. Poshan Tracker is supposed to be a complete census of children attending or at least enrolled at *anganwadis*, we do not know how complete the information is. NFHS data on the other hand is supposed to be representative of the entire population (including children who do not go to *anganwadis*)," said Economist Reetika Khera. The two datasets cover different populations and use different methods and their figures are not strictly comparable.

"We do not know to what extent one can take Poshan Tracker data at face value. *Anganwadi* workers are under pressure to keep data entry on the Tracker updated and they experience all kinds of issues with the app and connectivity, so often they just enter some data, which may or may not reflect the child's actual weight and height," she added.

The latest publicly available Poshan Tracker data is for July 2025, and provides separate figures for stunting (low height for age), wasting (low weight for height) and underweight (low weight for age) rather than a single combined malnutrition percentage. It shows that about 32.7% of children were stunted, 7.2% were wasted and 18.4% were underweight in Gujarat **(Chart 1).** Among 36 States and Union Territories, the State ranks 21st in stunting and 31st in both wasting and underweight, placing it in the poorest performers bracket among States in key malnutrition indicators.

Poshan Tracker data for July 2025 shows that several States in central and eastern India rank near the bottom on these indicators. Bihar (9.3%), Chhattisgarh (7.7%) and Madhya Pradesh (8.1%) are among the worst performers in wasting, while Madhya Pradesh (24.8%) records the highest proportion of underweight children. In the case of stunting, Uttar Pradesh (48.8%) has the highest prevalence, followed by Jharkhand, Assam, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, each with more than 42% of children found to be stunted. In contrast, States such as Goa, Sikkim, Manipur, Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu rank among the better performers, reporting lower levels of stunting, wasting and underweight.

Verifying the claim

NFHS-5 (2019-21) is the latest round of the nationally representative survey on health and nutrition released so far, as the results for NFHS-6 (scheduled for 2023-24) are yet to be published.

In NFHS-5, 39% of children under the age of five in Gujarat were stunted, 25.1% were wasted, and 39.7% were underweight. NFHS does not report a single overall malnutrition percentage and these indicators are widely used to assess child malnutrition. The corresponding national averages were 36% for stunting, 19.3% for wasting and 32.1% for underweight **(Chart 2)**. Stunting and underweight levels are both close to 40%, so the statement that around "40 out of 100 children" are malnourished is consistent with NFHS findings, depending on which indicator is used.

Mr. Mevani also said that "a large proportion of them belonged to tribal communities." District level figures based on NFHS-5 show that several of the worst performing districts are among those identified as tribal districts by the Tribal Development Department of the Gujarat government **(Table 3).**

In the case of stunting, four of the five worst affected districts: Dahod (55.3% stunted), Chhota Udaipur (48.6%), Narmada (47.2%) and Panchmahal (47.1%) are tribal districts. Wasting shows a similar pattern, with The Dangs (40.9% wasted), Tapi (36.6%), Panchmahal (35.7%) and Sabarkantha (33.1%) also ranking among the highest, all of them tribal districts. In the case of underweight, all five of the worst affected districts are tribal districts: The Dangs (53.1% underweight), Dahod (53%), Narmada (52.8%), Panchmahal (51.9%) and Tapi (51.8%).

The claim that about 40% of children in Gujarat are malnourished is thus supported by NFHS-5 data, which shows that stunting and underweight levels are close to the claim. District level data also shows that several of the worst affected districts are tribal districts, pointing to a higher burden of malnutrition in tribal communities.

Scale of malnutrition

The data for the charts were sourced from the National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-21) and Rajya Sabha Question and Answers

Nutrition check: A caretaker weighing a young child at an anganwadi in Gujarat. VIJAY SONEJI

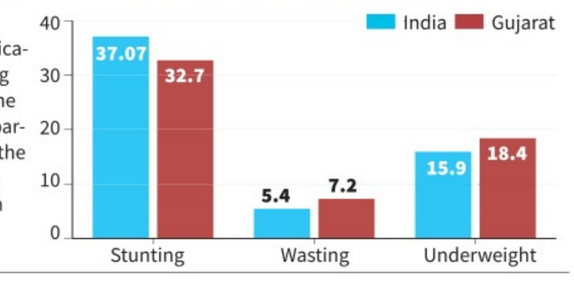


CHART 1: Key malnutrition indicators (in %) among children under the age of five, comparing Gujarat with the national average based on Poshan Tracker data for July 2025

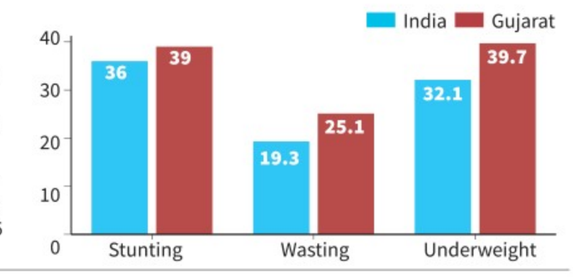


CHART 2: Key malnutrition indicators (in %) among children under the age of five, comparing Gujarat with the national average based on NFHS-5

TABLE 3: Key malnutrition indicators (in %) among children under the age of five, across selected districts of Gujarat based on NFHS-5 with all the districts included identified as **tribal districts**

District	Stunted	Wasted	Underweight
Dahod	55.3	27.8	53
Chhota Udaipur	48.6	28.4	48.1
Narmada	47.2	23	52.8
Panchmahal	47.1	35.7	51.9
Aravali	47.1	29	47.2
Tapi	41.7	36.6	51.8
Bharuch	40.9	24.5	45.5
Banaskantha	39	25.5	44.1
Valsad	37.8	23.2	34.8
The Dangs	37.6	40.9	53.1
Sabarkantha	37	33.1	41
Navsari	36.8	29	43.6
Surat	36.1	26	32.5

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 17, 1976

A stamp not officially released

Mangalore, March 15: A stamp of Param Vir Chakra not officially issued by Postal Department, but stated to have leaked out prematurely, has become the star attraction in Mangalapex 76, the first ever district-level Philatelic Exhibition held here between March 12 and 14, sponsored by the P and T department.

The 25-paise denomination stamp was to have been officially released by the P and T Department on last Republic Day but was postponed, and the definite date of release is not fixed yet.

Meanwhile, the stamp has been issued from some post offices in the country and one stamp bearing a postmark of a post office in Tamil Nadu on Feb. 9 was on display from out of the collections of Dr. V.S. Prabhu of Mangalore and has been attracting attention of philatelists here. It was later found that Dr. K.S. Prabhakara Rao, founder President of the Philatelic Association of South Kanara, was also among those who has one such 'Param Vir Chakra' stamp having been defaced on March 12 from Belgaum.

Leading philatelists who are attending the Exhibition differ in their views regarding the philatelic value of such prematurely issued stamps.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MARCH 17, 1926

Broadcasting Parliament debates

London, March 15: In the Commons, replying to Mr. Campbell with regard to the broadcasting of proceedings of certain State legislatures of United States, Viscount Wolmer said he had seen reports that proceedings of Japanese Diet were broadcast last December and the proceedings of United States Senate were frequently broadcast. He had no information with regard to the results.

Mr. Applin asked for an assurance that the "mother of Parliaments" would be the father of broadcasting from Parliamentary viewpoint. (Cries of 'No')

Mr. Penny (Conservative) humorously declared that the medical profession had expressed opinion that there would be an outbreak of sleepy sickness if this was done. (Laughter)

From Page One

India to sign U.S. deal after clarity on tariffs

India and the U.S. announced a trade deal on February 2 and a joint statement on the finalisation of a framework for the deal was released on February 7. Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal had said that the deal would be signed in March.

The U.S. Supreme Court on February 20 ruled against the validity of U.S. President Donald Trump's use of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) to levy reciprocal tariffs on America's trade partners. It is after this that the U.S. imposed the 10% tariffs on all its trade partners under Section 122 of the Trade Act, 1974. These tariffs are in force for a period of 150 days from February 24.

"The U.S. deal was to be signed in March. When we said this, at that time the Supreme Court judgement on IEEPA tariffs had not come," the official explained. "Now with the Supreme Court judgement on IEEPA tariffs, the tariffs per se don't exist." Under the framework announced by the two countries, the U.S. was to impose an 18% tariff on India. Now, the new rate will depend on the rates the U.S. imposes on India's competitors.

"Depending on how their tariff architecture settles, that will determine where India will land," the official said. "In case all others are at 19% and above then India will remain at 18%. But if others come down, then India will also come down."

On Russian oil

Mr. Agrawal also highlighted that the U.S.' removal of tariffs on India is linked to its import of Russian oil. "On February 7, 2026, the 25% additional advalorem tariffs imposed by the U.S. on certain Indian exports citing India's imports of Russian oil were removed," Mr. Agrawal noted. "We can say that we are buying Russian oil and there has been an increased buying of Russian oil in the current month because of the challenges we are facing."

10 dead as fire breaks out in Odisha hospital

The incident took place around 2.30 a.m. when relatives of patients observed smoke billowing out from the trauma care ICU where several accident victims were admitted in critical condition.

Though the fire service was immediately contacted, it took them about 30 minutes to reach the spot. By that time, hospital staff, security guards and relatives had already started efforts to extinguish the fire and shift the affected patients. However, patients were complaining about severe asphyxia in the smoke-filled hospital rooms.

"My father, Madhusudan Dalai, was grievously injured in an accident about 11 to 12 days ago. He was undergoing treatment in the ICU. His condition was fast improving. Doctors had told me that he might be released in a day or two. Around 3.30 a.m., I received a phone call that fire had broken out in the ICU. When I reached the spot, my father had already lost his life," said Amitabh Dalai, the patient's son.

Patients were shifted to the New Medicine building and orthopaedic wards. As many as 11 hospital employees, including private security guards, sustained injuries. Their conditions were stated to be stable.

Terming the incident unfortunate and tragic, the Chief Minister announced *ex gratia* of ₹25 lakh each for the family members of the deceased.

President Droupadi Murmu condoled the loss of lives in the fire and wished for a speedy recovery of the injured. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that an *ex gratia* of ₹2 lakh from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund would be given to the next of kin of each deceased, and the injured would be given ₹50,000 each.

Mr. Majhi has constituted a high-level fact-finding team under the chairmanship of Development Commissioner Deoranjan Kumar Singh. He has also ordered a judicial probe to investigate the reasons behind the fire incident.

Protests held in Ladakh calling for Statehood

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Protest rallies were held in Ladakh on Monday, marking the first demonstration since violence erupted in September last year, on the call of the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) and the Leh Apex Body (LAB) to press for Statehood status and inclusion in the Sixth Schedule.

Hundreds of locals marched from Singay Namgyal Chowk up to Leh Polo Ground in Leh town. In Kargil, protesters held a rally. Protesters raised slogans that the current Union Territory status was unacceptable to the region.

"For the last six years, the people of Ladakh have been deprived of democratic representation and constitutional safeguards. The voices from the mountains are growing louder for justice. Although our activist Sonam Wangchuk has been released, our struggle for legitimate rights will continue. We also demand the release of Deldan Namgyal and Smanla Dorjey," a member of KDA, Sajjad Kargili, said.

NDA wins eight RS seats in Bihar, Odisha; Haryana results on hold

BJP national president Nitin Nabin and Bihar CM Nitish Kumar romp home as NDA secures all five Rajya Sabha seats in Bihar; the party also secures victory of three candidates in Odisha; BJP and the Congress file separate plaints in Haryana

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Democratic Alliance romped home with all five Rajya Sabha seats in Bihar and three in Odisha while the counting for the two seats in Haryana was delayed after the BJP and the Congress filed separate complaints.

A Congress delegation met the Election Commission (EC) in Delhi over the matter and submitted a memorandum, with Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge earlier writing to the EC alleging attempts to interfere with the integrity of the election.

Of the total 37 vacancies in Rajya Sabha, elections were held for only 11 seats in Bihar, Odisha and Haryana as the rest of the members were earlier elected unopposed.

In Odisha, the BJP secured the victory of three candidates, including Dilip Ray, a hotelier and Independent candidate it supported, while the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) managed to win just one seat amid large scale cross-voting.

(Left) Bihar Deputy CM Samrat Choudhary congratulates Nitin Nabin on his Rajya Sabha victory. Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi greets Manmohan Samal, Dilip Ray and Sujeet Kumar. ANI, BISWARANJAN ROUT

State BJP president Manmohan Samal, sitting BJP MP Sujeet Kumar and BJD candidate Santrupta Mishra saw comfortable victories, with first preference votes from party MLAs. A fierce competition was expected between Mr. Ray and Datteswar Ray, a "common" candidate announced by the BJD with support from the Congress and Communist Party of India (Marxist). In the end, it turned out to be a one-sided fight with many Congress and BJD MLAs voting across party lines for Mr. Ray, one of founding members of the BJD. As many as 11 MLAs, including eight from BJD and three from Congress, had cross-voted.

In Haryana, where two Rajya Sabha seats were up for grabs, the process got stuck at the counting stage after the BJP and the Congress filed separate complaints. The counting was to begin at 5 p.m., but had not begun at the time of filing of this report.

In Bihar, all five candidates of the NDA made it to the Rajya Sabha after four MLAs of the Opposition *Mahagatbandhan* did not turn up for the voting. All 202 MLAs of the NDA cast their votes, whereas only 37 MLAs from the *Mahagatbandhan* voted.

The five candidates who secured victory included two from the BJP – national president Nitin Nabin and Shivesh Kumar and two from the Janata Dal (United) – Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Ramnath Thakur. Rashtriya Lok Morcha (RLM) president and former Union Minister Upendra Kushwaha also secured victory. Out of the six Congress MLAs, three skipped the voting process – Manohar Prasad Singh, Surendra Prasad and Manoj Bishwas. Rashtriya Janata Dal MLA Faisal Rahman also skipped voting.

There was a contest for the fifth seat between Mr. Shivesh Kumar and RJD candidate Amarendra Dhari Singh. As per the calculation, there was a requirement of 41 votes to win a seat from the NDA side and Mr. Shivesh Kumar got 38 votes whereas Mr. Singh got 37 votes. According to the Assembly Secretariat, Mr. Nitish Kumar and Mr. Nabin each secured 44 votes whereas Mr. Thakur and Mr. Kushwaha got 42 votes each.

Opposition notice seeking CEC's removal cites his remarks against Rahul

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The notice signed by 193 Opposition MPs has listed seven charges against Gyanesh Kumar

The notice seeking the removal of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar cites concerns ranging from the selection process for the post to his public confrontation with Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, and reports of widespread deletion of voters in two constituencies in Karnataka, an Opposition leader said on Monday.

The Opposition is yet to make the contents of the 10-page notice against Mr. Kumar public. The notice signed by 193 Opposition MPs – 130 in the Lok Sabha and 63 in the Rajya Sabha – has listed seven charges against Mr. Kumar including "partisan and discriminatory conduct", "obstruction of inquiries into electoral fraud" and "mass disenfranchisement".

The Opposition alleges that the special intensive revision (SIR) exercise was used to benefit the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party.

The notices, filed on Friday, follow months of Opposition protests over the SIR of electoral rolls. MPs have alleged "manipulation" of voter lists and accused the Election Commission (EC) of overlooking complaints of disenfranchisement.

According to an Opposition leader, the notices draw heavily from Mr. Gandhi's February 2025 dissent note, submitted when Mr. Kumar was selected as CEC by the three-member committee comprising the Prime Minister, the Home Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Gandhi had termed the government's late-night decision to appoint the CEC "disrespectful and discourteous", pointing out that the committee's composition and process were under challenge in the Supreme Court. The main point of contention has been the removal of Chief Justice of India from the selection committee, which now comprises the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, and a Union Cabinet Minister, securing a majority for the government.

The notices also cite Mr. Kumar's public ultimatum to Mr. Gandhi at an August 2025 press conference, where the CEC demanded that he either apologise or file a signed affidavit backing his allegations of "vote theft". The Opposition parties said that such remarks were partisan and compromised the neutrality of the office.

They have also flagged alleged voter-roll manipulation in two Karnataka Assembly seats, Aland and Mahadevapura.

Centre responsible for the shortage of cooking gas: Kharge

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday held the Centre responsible for the ongoing LPG crisis, and accused it of failing to take pre-emptive measures despite knowing that the West Asia conflict could disrupt maritime routes and energy supplies.

Raising the issue during Zero Hour in the Upper House, Mr. Kharge said the government had not undertaken advance planning or arranged alternative import routes, even though India imports nearly 60% of its LPG needs, with 90% of these imports passing through the Strait of Hormuz.

The impact of the disruption was now visible across the country, from households to restaurants and MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises), of which many have scaled down or halted operations due to non-availability of cylinders, Mr. Kharge said. Waiting time for refills had stretched to 25 days in urban centres, and up to 45 days in villages, triggering panic booking and fears of hoarding, he said.

Mallikarjun Kharge

Responding to Mr. Kharge, Union Health Minister and the Leader of the House J.P. Nadda accused the Congress of exploiting a national crisis for political gain instead of standing with the people. The LPG shortage, Mr. Nadda said, was an outcome of the West Asia conflict, in which India had "no contribution".

Opposition targets Centre on LPG crisis, foreign policy

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Questioning the allocation of ₹57,381 crore for the Economic Stabilisation Fund, proposed by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Appropriation Bill to address possible supply chain difficulties due to the conflict in West Asia, the Opposition said the crisis was "man-made".

Participating in the discussion on the Bill, senior Congress MP Shaktisinh Gohil said that, since Independence, India had been committed to remaining non-aligned. The Strait of Hormuz is important to the interests of the country, Mr. Gohil said, adding that India's relationship with Iran had been "very good" for many centuries. "There was no need to visit Israel," Mr. Gohil said, criticising Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to that country.

"Foreign policy should be in the interest of the country. Failure in maintaining good relations [with other countries] is the reason for such a huge demand [for an Economic Stabilisation Fund] now," he said, adding that the Opposition was concerned with regard to the issue of cooking gas. "People are in long lines waiting for LPG," Mr. Gohil said.

BJP MP Arun Singh contested him and claimed that leaders of the Congress and Samajwadi Party (SP) were hoarding gas cylinders to create panic among the public. Iran had assured safe passage for Indian ships, and ships with petroleum products had started reaching the Indian coast, Mr. Singh said.

Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) MP John Brittas questioned the government's silence on the war against Iran. It was impacting India's economy, Mr. Brittas said.

"When over 60% of the strait comes under the control of Iran, what was the need to have an adverse relationship with Iran?", Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) Sanjay Singh, said

Deve Gowda writes to Sonia over 'disruptions' in Parliament

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Former Prime Minister and Janata Dal (Secular) leader H.D. Deve Gowda has written to Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi, expressing concern over "chaos" in and around Parliament, and raising questions on the conduct of the Leader of the Opposition in leading protests that have disrupted proceedings during the ongoing Budget Session.

In a letter dated March 16, Mr. Deve Gowda said he had been "greatly disturbed by a certain chaos that has been unthinkingly introduced inside the Parliament and in its larger premises, primarily by the Opposition parties."

H.D. Deve Gowda

Mr. Deve Gowda said he had spent nearly 65 years as a legislator and parliamentarian, nearly 90% of which was on the Opposition benches. "You, yourself, have spent long years in the Opposition, and while there, you have conducted yourself with grace and maturity. Since this may well turn out to be the last parliamentary session of my life, I feel compelled to say a few things with the hope that it will lead to the gradual restoration of parliamentary traditions and decorum," he said.

"I strongly feel that Congress parliamentarians, led by the Leader of Opposition (LoP), have provoked far too many disruptions inside Parliament and in its premises," he said. The veteran leader said such actions had created an "attitude of non-seriousness".

Acknowledging that the role of the Opposition was to highlight the shortcomings of the government, Mr. Deve Gowda said this must be done through "well-established and time-tested methods", urging Ms. Gandhi to intervene.

Govt., Opposition reach consensus to revoke suspension of eight MPs

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The suspension of eight Opposition MPs from the Lok Sabha is likely to be revoked on Tuesday, after the government and Opposition parties on Monday reached a consensus on the issue at a meeting of floor leaders convened by Speaker Om Birla.

Sources said that parties agreed that members would not cross over into the Well of the House to oppose those on the other side, throw papers at the Speaker's podium or protest at the desk of the secretary general.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, senior Congress leader K. C. Venugopal, Congress chief whip K. Suresh, Samajwadi Party leader Dharmendra Yadav, Trinamool Congress' Satabdi Roy and Supriya Sule of the NCP were among those present at the meeting. Among NDA leaders, Union MinisterRajeev Ranjan Singh and Shrikant Shinde of the Shiv Sena were present.

Suspended Congress MPs protest at the Parliament premises over the nationwide shortage of LPG gas cylinders on Monday. ANI

On February 3, seven Congress MPs and one CPI (M) MP were suspended for unruly behaviour following a resolution passed by the Lok Sabha during the first part of the Budget session. The suspended members are Gurjeet Singh Aujla, Hibi Eden, C. Kiran Kumar Reddy, Amarinder Singh Raja Warring, Manickam Tagore, Prashant Padole and Dean Kuriakose (all Congress) and S Ventakesan of the CPI(M).

Issuing a bulletin, the Lok Sabha secretariat reminded members that Speaker Om Birla has barred placards, posters and banners from being brought into Parliament. "It has also come to light that AI-generated portraits, pictures and slogans of a derogatory nature are being displayed on several of these posters," it said, urging members to comply with the directions.

ASSEMBLY POLLS

Nearly 50% of voters in Assam are women

Almost 50% of the 2.5 crore electorate in Assam are women, the State's Chief Electoral Officer, Anurag Goel, said on Monday.

Of the 2,50,21,413 voters registered so far, 1,25,04,501 are women, accounting for 49.97%. The list has 321 third gender voters. Mr. Goel said 1.64 lakh voters were added to the 2.49 crore electors named in the final list of voters published on February 10.

"We will continue to update the list until the last day of filing of nomination papers," he said. Filing of nominations for the election on April 9 began on Monday and will continue until March 23, Mr. Goel said. According to the Election Commission, 6,28,093 voters are first-timers in the 18-19 years age group, while 2,482 voters are aged over 100.

Women show their voter cards during the 2024 Lok Sabha election in Assam. FILE PHOTO

Raijor Dal not to contest against Gaurav Gogoi

Activist-turned-MLA Akhil Gogoi's Raijor Dal has offered a strategic understanding with the Congress despite the two parties failing to ally.

Mr. Akhil Gogoi, president of the Raijor Dal, has asked his party not to field a candidate against his Congress counterpart, Gaurav Gogoi, in the Jorhat Assembly seat. The constituency is part of the Jorhat Lok Sabha constituency, which the latter represents.

"As an experienced parliamentarian, Gaurav Gogoi knows the Constitution of India and can contribute to law-making, unlike most of our MLAs. This is why I want him to enter the Assam Assembly," the Raijor Dal chief said.

The Congress and the Raijor Dal are rivals in three seats — Dhemaji, Goalpara East, and Margherita.

"Trinamool has been in power for 15 years, and the promises they made have not been kept. BJP, too, makes big speeches but does not do anything

G.A. MIR
Congress leader

47% MLAs in Bengal face criminal cases

Nearly half of West Bengal MLAs face criminal charges while over half are crorepatis, according to a report by the Association for Democratic Reforms and West Bengal Election Watch. It found that 136 MLAs (47%) have declared criminal cases and that 152 out of the 291 MLAs analysed (52%) are crorepatis. PTI

"In the next 23 days till the poll date, we will present issues that are affecting the people of the State. We are not interested in any controversy

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR
BJP Kerala president

Star contestant: Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari has been fielded from two constituencies. ANI

BJP announces candidates for 144 Bengal seats

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday announced its first list of 144 candidates for the Assembly election in West Bengal.

Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Suvendu Adhikari will contest from two constituencies – Nandigram in Purba Medinipur district and Bhabanipur in Kolkata. Former State BJP president Dilip Ghosh has been nominated from Kharagpur Sadar, while former Rajya Sabha MP Swapan Dasgupta has been fielded from Kolkata's Rashbehari.

The saffron party has given ticket to 41 MLAs, three former MLAs, and two former MPs. The list has 11 women, but no Muslim candidates.

Among the sitting MLAs, the BJP has renominated Agnimitra Paul from Asansol Dakshin (Paschim Bardhaman district), Chandana Bauri from Saltora (Bankura), Shikha Chatterjee from Dabgram-Phulbari (Jalpaiguri), and Malati Rava Roy from Tufanganj (Cooch Behar).

Sitting MLA Shankar Ghosh is contesting again from Siliguri in Darjeeling district and actor-turned-politician Rudranil Ghosh is contesting from Shipbur in Howrah. Former Barrackpore MP Arjun Singh's son Pawan Singh, who is also the MLA of Bhatpara Assembly, is defending his seat.

However, the biggest highlight of the list has been the fielding of Mr. Adhikari from Bhabanipur, where Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is the MLA. In the 2021 Assembly election, Mr. Adhikari had defeated Ms. Banerjee from Nandigram by a margin of 1,956 votes.

The Chief Minister had to return to Bhabanipur and get herself elected to the West Bengal Assembly in a byelection.

192 candidates in Left Front list

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

The CPI (Marxist)-led Left Front on Monday released its candidate for 192 of 294 Assembly constituencies for the coming West Bengal Assembly election. Party veterans along with emerging youth leaders have made the list, which also includes 27 women candidates.

The highlight of the list is Sabina Yasmin from Kaliganj Assembly seat. Ms. Yasmin is the mother of nine-year-old Tamanna Khatun, who was killed in political violence on June 23, 2025. Trinamool Congress workers hurled crude bombs on her residence after winning the Assembly byelections killing the child on the spot.

Some of the most important faces to emerge in the list are women youth leaders Minakshi Mukherjee, who will contest from Uttarpara, and Dipsita Dhar, from Dum Dum Uttar. Former Kolkata Mayor and Rajya Sabha member Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharya, from Jadavpur, and former MLA and senior minority leader Deblina Hembram, from Ranibandh, are among the other notable names in the first list.

The Congress and the Left Front fielding candidates separately marks the end of almost a decade of understanding between the two political forces. In the last Assembly election in 2021, the Left Front and the Congress drew a blank, while the Indian Secular Front (ISF) won one seat.

LDF seeks third term, UDF readies to end 10-year drought; BJP a bystander

A good outing in the 2025 local body polls has energised the UDF that seeks to deny the LDF a hat-trick in Kerala; amid welfare promises, the West Asia war may dominate political discourse; the BJP hopes to make a mark, having won a Lok Sabha seat and the Thiruvananthapuram corporation

IN FOCUS

G. Anand
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The battle lines in Kerala for the 2026 Assembly election have been drawn, and the impending poll campaign may have the makings of a close race.

The ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF), weighed down by 10 years of incumbency, is seeking to defy the odds and return to power for a third consecutive term. It is also battling dissidents.

Out of power for two consecutive terms, the polls pose an existential threat to the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF). However, a remarkable performance in the 2025 local body elections has put a spring in the UDF's step.

The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) draws strength from its show in the 2024 Lok Sabha election and it helming the prestigious Thiruvananthapuram Municipal Corporation. The BJP seeks to end what it perceives as the "bane of LDF-UDF revolving door politics".

Gulf conflict

The polls will be fought under the shadow of the West Asia war and the economic uncertainty caused by looming fuel shortages. The families of an estimated 3.5 million Keralites employed in West Asian countries comprise a significant section of the electorate. The conflict, including the attacks on Gaza, may also influence, in some measure, the voting behaviour of the Muslim community in the State, who comprise an estimated 26.56% of the population as per the 2011 Census.

The LDF and UDF calculus seems centred on the conjecture that the BJP's strong showing in at least 30 Assembly seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha election and its performance in several State elections might push the Muslim community towards the traditional fronts.

The LDF will bank on its track record in social welfare and development. As many as 62 lakh voters, chiefly the elderly, widows, persons with disabilities, and agricultural labourers, draw a monthly pension of ₹2,000. The UDF has sought to outmatch the LDF by promising to hike the dole to ₹3,000 if voted to power.

The BJP believes that the LDF's social welfare pitch alone will not sway the middle-class voters. Both the BJP and the UDF will put to intense scrutiny the LDF's claims of large-scale investment, critical infrastructure development, job creation, limiting inflation, improving public healthcare and providing free housing.

Several undercurrents could influence the outcome of this election. The LDF and the Congress fear that the BJP's inroads into the influential Nair and Ezhava Hindu communities could dent their respective strongholds.

The BJP's overtures to Christians, particularly to Church-backed settler farmers in the hill districts, have influenced the LDF and the UDF's strategising. Human-wildlife conflict, entry of women into Sabarimala and the gold theft case, dissent in coalition ranks over candidate selection and seat sharing, the SIR and accusations of disenfranchisement of anti-NDA voters will keep the pot boiling till the polls.

Key contests

The State is also bracing for high-profile contests. Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee president Sunny Joseph is likely to face former Health Minister K. K. Shailaja in Peravoor in Kannur.

BJP State president Rajeev Chandrasekhar is contesting against CPI(M) State Committee member and Education Minister V. Sivankutty in Nemom, Thiruvananthapuram.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and Leader of the Opposition V. D. Satheesan are contesting from Dharmadom (Kannur) and Paravur (Ernakulam), respectively.

Former Union Minister V. Muraleedharan will take on CPI(M) State committee member and former Devaswom Minister Kadakampally Surendran in Kazhakkoottam Assembly constituency in Thiruvananthapuram.

Former Minister G. Sudhakaran, who left the CPI (M) after being denied a seat citing age and term limit, is contesting against CPI(M) MLA H. Salam, in Ambalappuzha, with UDF support. Kerala Congress (M) chairperson Jose K. Mani is contesting from Pala in Kottayam, a seat long held by his father, the late K. M. Mani, but where Mr. Jose was defeated by the UDF's Mani C. Kappan in 2021.

CPI(M) Kannur district secretariat member T. K. Govindan is contesting as an Independent from Taliparamba constituency, accusing the CPI(M) State secretary M. V. Govindan of nepotism. Senior CPI(M) leader and Mr. M. V. Govindan's wife, P. K. Shyamala, is the LDF candidate in the Assembly segment. Former Kerala BJP president K. Surendran is contesting from Manjeswaram in Kasaragod, where he lost in 2016 and 2021.

The Assembly election for 140 seats in the State will be held on April 9, with counting on May 4.

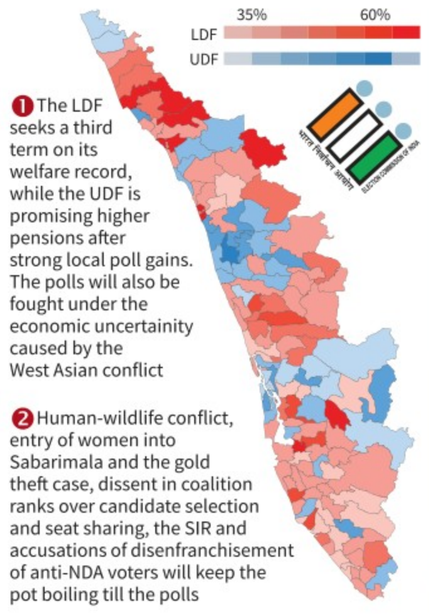
Mapping Kerala's elections

Kerala's 2026 Assembly election is shaping into a three-front contest, with LDF seeking a third term as UDF resurgence and BJP's ambitions reshape the polls

A worker arranging poll materials of different political parties at a store in Thiruvananthapuram. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

The map shows region-wise breakup of Kerala's electoral constituencies, according to CSDS classifications

The map shows alliance-wise results of Kerala's 2021 Assembly election results. The darker the shade, the higher the vote share (in %)



1. The LDF seeks a third term on its welfare record, while the UDF is promising higher pensions after strong local poll gains. The polls will also be fought under the economic uncertainity caused by the West Asian conflict

2. Human-wildlife conflict, entry of women into Sabarimala and the gold theft case, dissent in coalition ranks over candidate selection and seat sharing, the SIR and accusations of disenfranchisement of anti-NDA voters will keep the pot boiling till the polls

Party-wise results-2021

Party	Seats
CPI(M)	62
CPI	17
KC(M)	5
JD(S)	2
NCP	2
INL	1
LJD	1
NSC	1
KC(B)	1
C(S)	1
JKC	1
IND	5
INC	21
IUML	15
KEC	2
KC(J)	1
RMPI	1
IND	1
LDF	99
UDF	41

Congress accuses EC of bias over poll schedule

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress general secretary (organisation) K. C. Venugopal on Monday accused the Election Commission of bias in announcing the poll schedule, claiming that the dates had been designed to restrict the party's campaign window.

He criticised the decision to hold the first phase of polling on April 9 in States where the Congress is a key contender. "There seems to be no urgency as the results will be announced only on May 4," he said. Assam, Kerala, and Puducherry will vote in a single phase on April 9.

He said after the last date for withdrawal of nominations, candidates would get barely 10 days for campaigning as the period coincides with the Holy Week, referring to Good Friday and the Vishu festival. About Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, where polling is scheduled in later phases, he said the dates were intended to curtail campaigning by Congress candidates and leaders.

Poll body transfers top bureaucrats, senior police officers in West Bengal

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Hours after the announcement of Assembly election in West Bengal, the Election Commission late on Sunday transferred the Chief Secretary, Home Secretary, and the Director-General of Police, among others.

While there have been instances of transfer of key officials of West Bengal during previous elections, such sweeping transfers are unprecedented in the administrative history of the State.

The EC transferred Nandini Chakravorty and appointed Dushyant Nariala as the Chief Secretary. Mr. Nariala is an IAS officer of the 1993 batch and was serving as Additional Chief Secretary of North Bengal Development Department.

The poll panel appointed Sanghamitra Ghosh as the Home Secretary replacing Jagdish Prasad Meena. Ms. Ghosh is a 1997-batch IAS officer and was holding charge of Secretary of the Women and Child Development Department.

Leading lady: West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee at a protest rally against LPG price hike and supply crisis in Kolkata on Monday. PTI

Officers who have been transferred will not be part of active election duty, says Election Commission

The Commission also transferred the DGP, Peeyush Pandey, and Kolkata Police Commissioner Supratim Sarkar.

Siddh Nath Gupta, a 1992-batch IPS officer, has been appointed the DGP in-charge of the State. Ajay Kumar Nand, an IPS officer of 1996 batch, has been appointed the new Commissioner of Kolkata Police.

The Commission also replaced ADG (law and order) West Bengal Police Vineet Goyal with Ajay Mukund Ranade, a 1995-batch IPS officer.

The EC said the officers who had been transferred would be kept away from active election duty. Most of the officers transferred had been in office for only a few months and were given key posts after a series of reshuffles by the State government.

Taking strong exception to the transfers put in effect by the EC, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said, "It does not matter who you [EC] appoint as replacement officers. They will all work for us, they all will work for Bengal." "Change everything but you will not be able to change the government in the State," the Trinamool Congress chairperson said during a public rally in Kolkata.

'Anti-women, Bengal'

In the past, Ms. Banerjee had reinstated transferred officers to their position soon after elections. "They chose the hour of midnight to remove Nandini Chakravorty, the Chief Secretary and a Bengali woman, without consulting the State government. It goes to show how anti-women they are... Our Home Secretary is a non-Bengali person. His removal reflects the deep disdain they have for efficient officers of Bengal," she said.

CPI(M) State Secretary Mohammad Salim said officials at the ground level who were engaging in electoral irregularities should be transferred. Mr. Salim said it was not about transfer of officials as "the people will transfer the entire government". The Assembly polls in the State will be held in two phases on April 23 and 29.

Trinamool MPs boycott RS sitting in protest

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Protesting against the removal of top bureaucrats in West Bengal by the Election Commission ahead of the Assembly election in the State, Trinamool Congress members on Monday walked out of the Rajya Sabha, boycotting its sitting for the day.

Speaking in the House, the party's Rajya Sabha leader Derek O'Brien said, "In the dead of night, the Chief Secretary and Home Secretary have been removed by the Election Commission. They have all the power to do it."

He said the Trinamool did not seek to disrupt the proceedings of the Upper House and would stay away.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju condemned their action. "He is raising the matter about a constitutional authority, which this house or the government has nothing to do with. If every member wants to question a constitutional authority... it is not wise," he said.

INBRIEF

SC asks Bhopal NGO to move HC on disposal of residual ash

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Bhopal Gas Peedith Sangharsh Sahyog Samiti to approach the Madhya Pradesh High Court with their concerns about the disposal of hazardous residual ash that remains after the incineration of toxic waste from the site of the infamous Bhopal gas tragedy at Union Carbide India Ltd (UCIL) in Bhopal. About 337 tonnes of hazardous waste from UCIL was incinerated, generating nearly 900 tonnes of toxic residual ash early last year. The hazardous waste was the fall-out of one of the biggest industrial disasters globally which took place in December 1984 when methyl isocyanate gas leaked out of the UCIL plant site and claimed over 5400 lives.

Five convicted, 35 acquitted in 2016 Una Dalit flogging case

A court in Gujarat's Gir Somnath district on Monday convicted five persons and acquitted 35 others in connection with the 2016 Una Dalit flogging case in which four members of a Dalit family, who traditionally worked as leather tanners, were attacked by over 40 members of an upper caste community for alleged cow slaughter. The verdict regarding a juvenile accused in the case is still pending. Proceedings against one police constable ended after he died while the trial was under way. Punishment for the five convicts will be announced on Tuesday.

Sahitya Akademi announces literary awards for 2025

The Sahitya Akademi on Monday announced its awards for 2025 in the 24 languages recognised by it, nearly three months after the process was abruptly put on hold following directives from the Union Culture Ministry. Among the winners are former diplomat Navtej Sarna, awarded in the English language category for his novel *Crimson Spring*; Hindi writer Mamta Kalia for her memoir *Jeete Jee Allahabad*; and Tamil author Sa Tamilselvan for his work *Thamizh Sirukathaiyin Thadangal* in the literary criticism genre. The awardees will receive an engraved copper plaque, a shawl, and ₹1 lakh.The announcement was delayed after the Culture Ministry cited a need for "restructuring" of the awards.

Haryana govt. refuses nod to prosecute academic

The Supreme Court on Monday disposed of a petition filed by Ashoka University Associate Professor Ali Khan Mahmudabad to quash criminal proceedings instituted against him for his social media posts on Operation Sindoor after the Haryana government informed the court that it had refused sanction for his prosecution. In a previous hearing, a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant had asked the Haryana government to refuse sanction as a "one-time gesture of magnanimity". The State, on Monday, appearing through Additional Solicitor-General S.V. Raju, said it had accepted the court's suggestion.

Naval warships escort Indian vessels from the Gulf of Oman

Three warships escort *Shivalik*, *Nanda Devi*, *Jag Laadki*; warships operating under Operation Sankalp, a mission aimed at safeguarding merchant shipping, protecting India's maritime interests

Saurabh Trivedi
Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

The Indian Navy has deployed warships to escort Indian-flagged merchant vessels transiting through the Persian Gulf region, according to official sources.

Three Indian Navy ships have escorted the Indian-flagged merchant ships *Shivalik*, *Nanda Devi*, and *Jag Laadki* from the Gulf of Oman after they crossed the Strait of Hormuz. The warships ensured the safe transit of vessels through vulnerable waters.

Though the conflict has been intense in the Persian Gulf west of Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf of Oman, east of the strait, has also seen attacks. *Jag Laadki*, carrying more than 80,000 tonnes of crude oil, left Fujairah terminal in the UAE on Sunday. The vessel had a narrow escape when the terminal was attacked while it was loading.

Sources said that naval ship escort to Indian merchant ships will continue to be provided. Some 22 Indian-flagged ships are still stranded west of the strait.

Safe arrival: LPG carrier *Shivalik* reached the Mundra Port on Monday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

While officials declined to disclose the names of the naval ships involved, a senior official confirmed that the warships were operating in the region under Operation Sankalp, a mission aimed at safeguarding merchant shipping and protecting India's maritime interests in the region.

Launched in June 2019, Operation Sankalp ensures the safe passage of Indian-flagged vessels through critical sea lanes, and saw action, including during the Houthi attacks.

Meanwhile, LPG carrier *Shivalik* reached the Mundra Port on Monday evening, the government confirmed. Earlier in the day, Rajesh Kumar Sinha, Special Secretary at the Shipping Ministry, told reporters in an inter-ministerial briefing that priority berthing and documentation had been arranged to ensure there was no delay in discharging the cargo.

Nanda Devi, another LPG carrier, is expected to reach Kandla port on Tuesday. Individually, the vessels are holding 46,000 tonnes of cargo, cumulatively, 92,172 tonnes. "Seafarers on board are all safe and would reaching tomorrow at Mundra port," Mr. Sinha said. *Jag Laadki* will be arriving at the Mundra Port on Tuesday.

He said there was "no congestion reported at any of the major ports" with export-bound containers at the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority having reduced to about 3,900 from 5,600.

Addressing reporters at the same briefing, Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary at the Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry, said that cooking gas continued to be an "issue of concern" though supply of LPG to domestic consumers continued uninterrupted. No dry out had been reported among distributors, she added.

Separately, in response to a query, the senior official informed that domestic LPG production had increased 36% since the supply maintenance order.

Responding to queries about U.S. President Donald Trump seeking countries send warships to guard passage of vessels from the Strait of Hormuz, Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson at the External Affairs Ministry, said the issue had not been taken up in any bilateral setting.

USCIRF is creating a distorted picture of India, says Centre

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), in its latest report, has presented a "distorted and selective picture of India", the External Affairs Ministry said on Monday.

"For several years now, the USCIRF has persisted in presenting a distorted and selective picture of India, relying on questionable sources and ideological narratives rather than objective facts. Such repeated misrepresentations only undermine the credibility of the Commission itself," Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said after the USCIRF in its latest report called for "targeted sanctions" against India's external intelligence agency, the Research & Analysis Wing, and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), "for their responsibility and tolerance of several violations of religious freedom by freezing those individuals' and entities assets and barring their entry into the United States".

The report further said that bilateral trade policies with India should be linked to "improvements in religious freedoms".

Randhir Jaiswal

"Instead of persisting with selective criticism of India, USCIRF would do well to reflect on the disturbing incidents of vandalism and attacks on Hindu temples in the United States," Mr. Jaiswal said.

'Needs attention'

"Growing intolerance and intimidation of members of the Indian diaspora in the United States merit serious attention," Mr. Jaiswal added.

There have been several incidents of violence against individuals belonging to the Indian community in the U.S. as well as members of the Indian diaspora in the U.S. in recent years.

There have also been several incidents of vandalism at Hindu temples and properties that India has urged the U.S. to address.

Oppn. flags govt. plan to move Bill on IPS deputation in CAPFs

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Opposition members on Monday questioned the government's intention to introduce a Bill in the ongoing session of the Parliament to codify the deputation of Indian Police Service (IPS) officers in the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), despite a Supreme Court ruling to progressively reduce IPS deputation up to the rank of Inspector-General in the CAPFs and grant them organised group stature.

Against this backdrop, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday met Ajay Malik, Assistant Commandant of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), who lost a leg in an Improvised Explosive Device blast during an anti-Maoist operation in Jharkhand on March 1. Mr. Malik who was airlifted to the AIIMS, Delhi had to undergo amputation and is presently recuperating at the CRPF's camp hospital in Delhi. He joined the CRPF in 2011 as an AC and 15 years on, remains at the same post.

The CAPFs officers have argued that despite leading operations from the front and several of them having been killed in the line of action, they face career stagnation and most times the first promotion comes only after 15-18 years of service.

Presently, 20% of posts in the rank of Deputy Inspector-General and 50% of posts in the rank of Inspector-General in the CAPFs are reserved for IPS officers through an executive order. The total strength of the CAPF is around 10 lakh, which includes 13,000 Group A cadre officers. The Home Ministry is the cadre controlling authority of both the CAPFs and IPS.

Jaishankar discusses West Asia situation with EU counterparts

The Hindu Bureau
LONDON

On the second day of his Brussels visit, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and had discussions, including about the situation in West Asia and Ukraine. Mr. Jaishankar was invited to interact with Foreign Ministers from the 27-member bloc, during the EU Foreign Affairs Council meeting on Monday, as per a statement from the External Affairs Ministry.

"We also discussed developments in the Middle East and in Ukraine. De-escalation, stability and energy security are our shared objectives," Ms. Von der Leyen said in a post on X, about her meeting with Mr. Jaishankar. The EU and India were focused on implementing the trade deal signed in January in New Delhi, "as soon as possible", she said.

S. Jaishankar meeting Foreign Ministers from the EU at the Foreign Affairs Council Meeting in Brussels on Monday. ANI

Thanking the EU's top diplomat Kaja Kallas for inviting him to the Foreign Affairs Council, Mr. Jaishankar said, "Our conversation today therefore covered trade, investment, technology, mobility and defence in particular."

"The stronger convergence between India and the EU in a multipolar world is also expressed in closer consultations," he added, saying West Asia, Ukraine, and the Indo-Pacific were discussed at the meeting. On Sunday, Mr. Jaishankar publicly thanked Armenia for the safe evacuation of 550 Indian nationals from Iran.

Ahead of the meeting, Ms. Kallas had outlined various options the EU was considering to open the Strait of Hormuz, a crucial body of water through which a quarter of the world's oil passes.

Mr. Jaishankar had said that India would be happy to share what New Delhi was doing with Tehran, with European countries, although he acknowledged that every country had a different relationship with Iran. He had also said there was no *quid pro quo* involved with Iran permitting the passage of two Indian-flagged tankers carrying LPG crossing the Strait on Saturday, saying this was based on a "history of dealing" with each other.

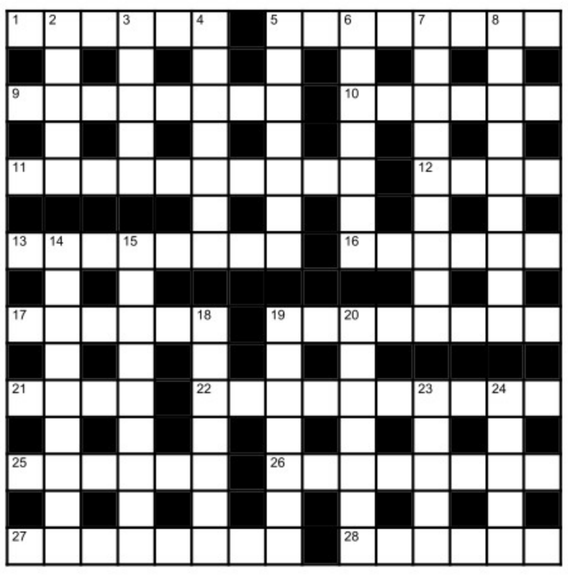
Calling the conflict "most unfortunate", he called for other countries to engage with Tehran. The Minister had also emphasised that India did not have a "blanket arrangement" with Tehran for safe passage of ships, but it was being arranged on a case-by-case basis and discussions were ongoing.

TH CROSSWORD + 14743

(set by Pixie Dust)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Diplomatic organisation's mainly political acknowledgement, brief & empty (6)
5 Gossip about satisfactory sex, (ultimate fantasy!) and celibacy (8)
9 Reverend's not pleased at first, to admit Switzerland's sailing vessel (8)
10 Picked up rows, few and far between (6)
11 Imperious dad in Paris, meets conservative member of parliament going ahead (10)
12 Yes, cycled around park, See! (4)
13 My one emergency fund? (3,5)
16 Finally locked abusive chef, without official delay, skilfully (6)
17 Try solid, clipped font (6)
19 Pipes too can be different (8)
21 Grave stand to begin with, bishop is extremely righteous? (4)
22 Busybody's late - frequently picked on? (10)
25 Analyse speed of light and unit of distance (6)
26 Sea captain spends energy and prime resources for a tall pole that supports the sails (8)
27 On vacation referee is back with double net (8)
28 Tempestuous stud smuggles gold for members of a royal family (6)

Down

2 Mother of Pearl, adventurer (Canadian) carried from the south (5)
3 Make up for amateur kicking small rock (5)
4 Spooner orders: "Call Uncle Boss!" (7)
5 Swear endlessly or begin to yell, it's unmindful (7)
6 Surveyed a small state, extremely excluded (7)
7 Sad effort deployed to reach some kind of compromises (5-4)
8 Should this flier indiscriminately hold up stilettos? (4,5)
14 A magic toe developed these days? (6,3)
15 Overly theatrical actor upset with former Prime Minister's mentor (9)
18 Loosely cut each food additive (7)
19 Perfect gem capturing endless era (7)
20 Principal mistakenly protects one who works hand-in-hand with customer (7)
23 Modest statement:"I'm idealistic to a large extent (5)
24 Underdog's not the first person wrapping up deal successfully (5)

SUDOKU

							4	
	3	8	4				1	
		7		9		6		3
2			7		8			
4		5				7		6
			5		3			4
8		2		3		1		
	1				5	3	8	
	7							

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

4	2	8	7	6	3	5	1	9
1	6	9	5	4	8	2	3	7
5	7	3	1	2	9	8	4	6
7	3	4	8	9	6	1	2	5
9	1	6	2	3	5	7	8	4
8	5	2	4	1	7	6	9	3
2	9	7	3	5	1	4	6	8
3	8	1	6	7	4	9	5	2
6	4	5	9	8	2	3	7	1

FAITH

Significance of Gudi Padwa

Gudi Padwa is a special festival for Maharashtra and Goa. It is celebrated on the first day of the Chaitra month which synchronises with the first day of the new moon. This day signifies the beginning of the new year, the heralding of spring and the harvesting of rabi crops. This is also the day when it is believed that Brahma created the universe and the sense of time. Lord Rama returned to Ayodhya on this day. Some rural Marathi and Konkan Hindu communities bond with Lord Siva's cosmic dancing and congregate together at Siva temples. People in Maharashtra also celebrate the day by commemorating the famous ruler Sivaji's victory over the Mughals, said Prof. Kumool Abbi.

The festival is celebrated by cleaning and decorating homes with rangoli. The day starts by consuming the bitter neem and jaggery, which is believed to purify the body, which expresses the acceptance of both bitter and sweet experiences, characterising life. Preparation of sweets such as puran poli, basundi and kesari bath is also made in earnest. The day is considered auspicious to start new undertakings, business ventures, vastu puja and investing in gold and silver and buying new vehicles.

The word Gudi Padwa has a very interesting meaning and significance. Padwa refers to the first day of the lunar fortnight, while Gudi refers to a flag made of bamboo that is anointed with garlands of flowers, mango and neem leaves, sugar crystals and an overturned silver or copper vessel.

As the flag is hoisted, it brings good luck, eclipsing all negativity. Gudi is hoisted on the right side of the house. All the constituents of Gudi signify something.

INBRIEF

Gujarat's GMDC, NMDC ink pact on rare earth elements

A Government of Gujarat enterprise Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation (GMDC) has entered into an MoU with central public sector enterprise NMDC to explore opportunities for collaboration in the Rare Earth Elements (REE) sector. Both organisations, under the MoU, will work together to evaluate opportunities for technical collaboration, project development and potential business structures. The focus will be assessing the potential development of an integrated rare earth value chain in Gujarat, including exploration, mining, beneficiation, processing and downstream applications. The engagement will primarily explore opportunities associated with GMDC's Ambadungar Rare Earth deposit. The partnership is also expected to facilitate knowledge exchange, technical evaluation and coordinated efforts towards advancing rare earth resource development, GMDC said on Monday.

RIL, Samsung C&T ink $3 bn green ammonia supply pact

Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL), developing a fully integrated new energy platform spanning renewable energy, energy storage, green hydrogen, downstream green fuels and chemicals, said it has entered into a binding long-term supply and purchase agreement (SPA) with Samsung C&T Corporation, South Korea, for the supply of Green Ammonia over a 15-year period commencing in the second half of FY2029. The SPA, valued at more than $3 billion, is one of the largest binding long-term Green Ammonia off-take agreements globally, the company said. "The SPA sets a new benchmark in the global energy landscape, with India emerging as an exporter of green fuels produced through an end-to-end value chain anchored in the country," it added.

Goods export flat in Feb.; official sees dip in March on conflict

Commerce Secretary Agrawal noted March may be challenging on account of logistical issues on West Asia crisis, while releasing Feb. data

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

India's trade balance stood at a deficit of about $4 billion in February compared with a surplus of $2.7 billion a year earlier due in large part to merchandise exports staying flat while imports of both merchandise and services grew significantly during the month.

Releasing the data, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said exports in March are likely to be impacted by the ongoing conflict in West Asia.

As per the Ministry of Commerce and Industry data, total exports, including merchandise and services, grew 11% to $76.1 billion, while total imports rose 21.7% to $80.1 billion.

Within this, merchandise imports widened gap over exports. Merchandise exports were largely flat at $36.6 billion in February compared with $36.9 billion a year earlier. Merchandise imports, however, climbed 24.2% to $63.7 billion over this period.

'Likely to worsen'

Mr. Agrawal said the situation may worsen in March on West Asia crisis.

"Despite all of the challenges, our merchandise exports have been doing well," Mr. Agrawal told the press. "The month of March will be a challenging one as well, because of too many logistics challenges, and when one part of the geography gets constrained, then too much of exports will not happen. Exports will likely see a downward trend this month because of the logistical challenges."

In February, services exports climbed almost 25% to $39.5 billion while imports grew almost 13% to $16.4 billion.

Sensex, Nifty50 surge 1.1% as concerns over energy supply ease

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

India's benchmark indices climbed 1.1% after concerns over energy supply eased with two Indian ships transporting LPG to India for the first time since the Iran war began.

Nifty50 and BSESensex30 opened at 23,116.10 and 74,415.79 respectively with a slight dip reaching the day's low after trading for more than an hour. The indices gradually gained and touched a high of 23,502 and 75,805.27 before closing at 23,408.80 and 75,502.85 respectively.

The optimism was not broad-based with about 2,212 stocks advancing and 1,074 stocks declining in over 3,371 stocks that traded on Monday on the NSE. Just six of the 21 NSE sectoral indices were positive.

The benchmarks had slid over 5% last week.

While the indices show signs of optimism, it has not reflected in oil prices and foreign exchange rates. Brent Crude Futures continued to trade at about $102 a barrel and rupee at over ₹92 a dollar. Besides, wholesale inflation came in at a 11-month high of 2.3% in February 2026.

A man outside the BSE.

"The sentiment was under pressure during the first half due to the global oil benchmark rising by about 1.7% to $105/barrel. However, markets rebounded sharply on reports the U.S. was preparing to form a coalition to escort ships via Strait of Hormuz, easing concerns over disruptions to global energy supplies," said Siddhartha Khemka, head of research, wealth management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	MONDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	75,503	1.26
US Dollar	92.28	-----
Brent oil	101.85	-----

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	1978.00	16.90
Adani Ports	1373.90	10.70
Apollo Hosp	7490.00	-60.00
Asian Paints	2217.70	20.90
Axis Bank	1214.70	17.40
Bajaj Auto	9073.00	198.00
Bajaj Finserv	1773.90	35.90
Bajaj Finance	878.15	23.10
Bharat Elec	429.50	-9.90
Bharti Airtel	1788.80	-14.60
Cipla	1300.00	-14.70
Coal India	460.30	-6.70
Dr Reddys Lab	1276.90	-15.40
Eicher Motors	6827.50	86.50
Eternal Ltd.	222.04	6.36
Grasim Ind	2654.40	85.80
HCL Tech	1328.60	3.20
HDFC Bank	840.60	23.60
HDFC Life	626.00	0.25
Hindalco	921.15	11.10
Hind Unilever	2175.70	15.70
ICICI Bank	1272.90	18.10
IntGlobeAvi	4222.10	63.90
Infosys	1249.80	1.50
ITC	308.25	6.80
Jio Financial Services Ltd.	234.35	-0.90
JSW Steel	1145.60	26.30
Kotak Bank	369.85	3.00
L&T	3469.40	30.40
M&M	3036.10	105.00
Maruti Suzuki	12757.00	166.00
Max Healthcare	970.60	-19.40
NestleIndia	1213.40	11.20
NTPC	382.40	-2.05
ONGC	260.45	-3.65
PowerGrid Corp	297.75	-3.20
Reliance Ind	1395.10	14.40
SBI Life	1909.20	4.80
State Bank	1066.70	19.70
Shriram Finance Ltd.	992.00	-11.60
Sun Pharma	1783.20	-18.40
TataConsumerProduct	1092.70	9.10
Tata Steel	186.94	3.43
TCS	2409.20	-1.30
Tech Mahindra	1339.50	6.70
Titan	4090.80	17.60
Tata Motors PV	314.40	0.30
Trent Ltd.	3596.10	108.30
UltraTech Cement	11099.00	483.00
Wipro	195.11	-2.47

Gem and jewellery export rises 4% in Feb. amid tariffs

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

The overall gross exports of gems and jewellery in February grew 3.86% (8.37% in rupee terms) year-on-year (YoY) to $2.68 billion (₹24,340.05 crore), as per data from the Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC).

For the period April 2025 to February 2026, the overall gross exports of gems and jewellery marginally grew 0.07% (4.34% in rupee terms) YoY to $25.93 billion (₹2,28,230.06 crore).

The data comes as a relief as the sector could do well despite the heavy tariff imposed by U.S. President Donald Trump.

"The past year has been a challenging one for the global gem and jewellery industry, shaped by evolving U.S. tariff policies, geopolitical uncertainties, and changing consumer preferences across key markets. Despite these headwinds, the Indian gem and jewellery sector has demonstrated remarkable resilience," said Kirit Bhansali, Chairman, GJEPC in a statement here.

Feb. WPI at 11-month high

Wholesale price index (WPI)-based inflation rose to a 11-month high of 2.13% in February on an uptick in prices of food and non-food articles, even though vegetable prices eased. PTI

PhonePe defers IPO, cites global pressures and volatile markets

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

PhonePe said it had 'temporarily deferred' its public market listing process due to the current geopolitical conflict and market volatility. The listing process will resume once there is some stability in global capital markets, the company said in a statement.

"We sincerely hope for a swift return to peace in all the affected regions. We remain committed to a public listing in India," said CEO Sameer Nigam.

Walmart will trim its stake in PhonePe by about 12% in the IPO, while Tiger Global and Microsoft plan to exit their stakes, according to the firm's IPO filing. The three firms will sell around 50.7 million shares in the offering, and PhonePe will not issue any new shares.

Sameer Nigam

(With inputs from Reuters)

Travelstack, Learnfluence, Tea Post get nod for IPO

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Three companies – travel technology firm Travelstack Tech, Learnfluence Education, which operates the 'Lakshya' coaching centres, and tea cafe chain Tea Post – have received approval from SEBI to raise funds through initial public offerings (IPOs), according to an update from the market regulator on Monday.

The development comes at a time when Indian equity markets are under pressure due to the ongoing conflict in West Asia.

So far this year, 12 companies have tapped the IPO market to raise funds.

Banks report highest contraction in MFI portfolios in Q3 FY26

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

Banks' microfinance portfolio outstanding contracted by 40% year-on-year to ₹65,687 crore in third quarter of FY26, according to a report released on Monday.

The fall is the sharpest among all categories of lenders, which also includes dedicated non-bank finance companies – MFIs (microfinance institutions) and small finance banks, according to the report by a credit information company.

Persistent stress in asset quality led to tightening of underwriting standards like adoption of guardrails to restrict number of loans and leverage at a borrower level, as per the report by Equifax and SIDBI.

Liquidity constraints

Liquidity constraints particularly in smaller lenders also led to lower disbursements, the report stated.

The overall industry portfolio outstanding was down 22% year-on-year and 7% sequentially in December, 2025.

The largest contraction has been seen by banks, followed by 25% for small finance banks, 22% by not-for-profit MFIs and others, 14% and 4% by NBFC-MFIs and NBFCs, respectively.

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS, TIRUPATI
BIRRD (T) HOSPITAL, TTD, TIRUPATI

NOTIFICATION

RECRUITMENT OF DOCTORS ON CONTRACT BASIS at BIRRD (T) HOSPITAL,TTD, Tirupati

Roc.No.TTD-104021(31)/122/2021-BIRRD Dated: 16.03.2026

The notification issued for recruitment of Doctors (i.e. Professor, Associate Professor, Asst. Professor, Med. Officer, Residents) on Contract for 2 years at BIRRD Trust Hospital, Tirupati is extended upto 31.03.2026 due to administrative reasons. Eligible doctors from across the country shall apply and may submit their applications **on or before 31.03.2026** and candidates who already applied need not apply once again. For further details log in **www.tirumala.org.**

TTD-40021/10/2025-PRO SEC(Adv.No.436),Date: 16.03.2026 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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विक्रम साराभाई अंतरिक्ष केंद्र / VIKRAM SARABHAI SPACE CENTRE
निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण ग्रुप / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP
तिरुवनंतपुरम / THIRUVANANTHAPURAM – 22 / (फोन नं. / Ph. No. 0471 – 2564568 / 4545)

दिनांक/Dated : 16-03-2026

ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करते हुए संक्षिप्त सूचना / BRIEF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से निम्नलिखित कार्यों के लिए ई-टेंडरिंग द्वारा ऑनलाइन मद-दर निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। On behalf of the President of India, online item-rate tenders are invited through E-tendering for the following works.

1. टर्ल्स, वीएसएससी में उच्च दाब परीक्षण सुविधा के लिए विद्युत कार्य / Electrical works for High Pressure Test Facility at TERLS, VSSC / **NIT No. VSSC/CMG/E01/35/2025-2026 Dated 16.03.2026 (पी.ए.सी./P.A.C: ₹ 65.43 लाख/Lakhs)**

डाउनलोड करने की अवधि / Period for downloading: दिनांक 17.03.2026, 11.00 बजे/ hrs. से/ to दिनांक 29.03.2026, 23.00 बजे/ hrs.

ई-निविदा की अवधि बढ़ाना / EXTENSION OF E-TENDER

1. वीआरसी मुख्य भवन फेस-II, वीएसएससी के संवर्धन के संवर्धन हेतु वातानुकूलन कार्य / Airconditioning works for augmentation of VRC Main Building Phase-II, VSSC, **NIT No. VSSC/CMG/A01/07/2025-2026 Dated 19.02.2026**

डाउनलोड करने की अवधि / Period for downloading: दिनांक 22.03.2026, 23.00 बजे तक बढ़ाए गए / Extended upto 23:00 hrs. on 22.03.2026

इच्छुक निविदाकार ब्यौरों के लिए www.tenderwizard.in/isro या www.isro.gov.in देखें। Interested tenderers may visit www.tenderwizard.in/isro or www.isro.gov.in for details.

Sd/- प्रधान, सीएमजी, वीएसएससी / Head, CMG, VSSC

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML, 1st Floor,
BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru – 560 052

No:DGM-1/BSWML/TEND/30/2025-26 Date:16.03.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through GOK KPP Portal Only) Call-02

The Deputy General Manager-1, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites bids from eligible bidders for the works. The details of the tender is as below.

Pkg. No.	Name of the works	Approx. Amount put to tender (Rs. in lakhs) Excluding GST	EMD (Amount in Rs.)	Time of Completion
P1	**Social Media Activities under SBM 2.0 With the following activities-Call-02.** a) Dissemination through Reputed Radio during the large events and Swachh Survekshan under Social Media Activities of SBMU 2.0 b) Social Media Campaign for activities under Mid Media Component under Social Media Activities of SBMU 2.0 c) Digital Awareness Drive under Social Media Activities of SBMU 2.0	**408.26**	**Rs.1,00,000/-** through e-payment under of the following i.e., online / RTGS / NEFT / OTC and the balance **Rs.5,13,000/-** by Bank Guarantee / FDR issued by Nationalized/ Scheduled Bank	**3 Years**
P2	**Mid Media Activities under SBM 2.0 With the following activities-Call-02.** a) Large Scale Events including clubbed with workshops, marathon, plogging, signature campaigns-Large scale events including clubbed with workshops, marathon, plogging, signature campaigns under Mid Media Activities SBMU 2.0 b) Ministry based programmes under SBM 2.0 - Programmes and events created by MoHUA which includes – world toilet day, swachhta pakhwada, Indian swachhta league, 3R Promotion, swachh Diwali, swachhta hi seva et., under Mid Media Activities SBMU 2.0	**588.47**	**Rs.1,00,000/-** through e-payment under of the following i.e., online / RTGS / NEFT / OTC and the balance **Rs.7,83,000/-** by Bank Guarantee / FDR issued by Nationalized/ Scheduled Bank	**2 Years**

Calendar of Events: 1) Last Date for Uploading Pre bid Queries: 19.03.2026 at 17:30 hrs. 2) Tender Pre Bid meeting: 20.03.2026 at 15:00 hrs at above mentioned office. 3) Last Date for Receipt of Tender: 25.03.2026 before 16:00 hrs. 4) Opening of Technical Bid: 26.03.2026 after 16:30 hrs.

More details can be downloaded from website - **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/6296/CCL/2025-26

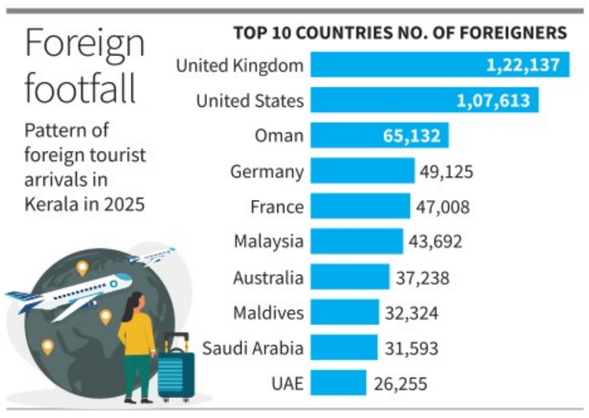
West Asia crisis ails Kerala's wellness sector

Dhinesh Kallungal
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

As neighbouring Colombo has introduced fuel rationing amid a drop in tourist arrivals following the escalating war between Iran and the combined forces of the U.S. and Israel, the hospitality sector in Kerala, which contributes around 10% of the State's Gross Domestic Product, is staring at a bleak future with a large number of cancellations, including in the medical tourism segment.

Kerala is considered the cradle of wellness tourism in the country, and nearly 70% of the foreign tourists visiting the State belong to this category.

About 85% of the foreigners visiting the State use either Doha or Dubai as transit points to reach Kerala, in the absence of direct flights connecting the State with Europe.



This movement has come to a halt following the outbreak of the war, leading to cancellations and postponements.

According to Sajeev Kurup, general secretary of the Confederation of Kerala Tourism Industries (CKTI) and chairman of the Ayurveda Task Force of FICCI's National Tourism Committee, the sector is facing an unprecedented crisis with travel restrictions coupled with an energy crisis.

"Despite the foreign tourist season nearing its fag end in Kerala, which usually begins in October-November and ends by March, the sector has already lost 20-25% of its business. There have also been no bookings for the next season since the war began.

The hospitality sector is also unable to operate smoothly due to shortages of commercial LPG, and the issue is likely to snowball into a major crisis if the war continues, especially once the Assembly elections in the country are over," said Mr. Kurup.

The crisis is likely to lead to lay-offs and cost-cutting measures once the upcoming domestic tourist season in April and May is over. According to James Kodianthara, former chairperson of the Kerala chapter of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), the domestic tourism sector will also be impacted by the disruption of global energy supply chains with the closure of restaurants.

The next financial year will be a difficult period for the sector unless the Centre introduces support measures such as the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS), which was rolled out during the COVID-19 pandemic, he said.

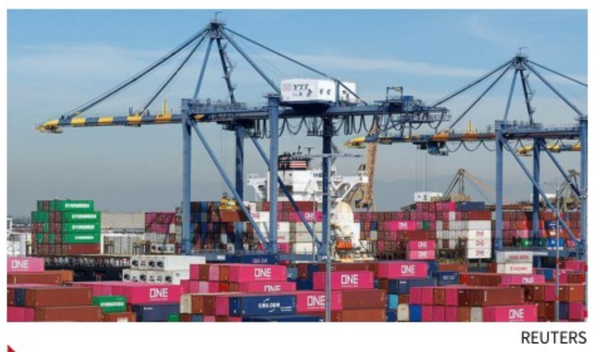
A foreign tourist visiting Kerala for medical tourism, particularly Ayurveda, typically spends two to three weeks in the State, significantly contributing to the local economy.

In 2025, about 8.21 lakh foreign tourists visited various destinations in Kerala, according to statistics from the State Tourism Department, compared with 7.38 lakh in 2023.

The United Kingdom and the United States together accounted for about 2.23 lakh visitors last year.

WASHINGTON

Trump says he has 'absolute right' to charge tariffs in another form



REUTERS

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Sunday he had the authority to impose duties despite the U.S. Supreme Court last month striking down his global tariffs. "I have the absolute right to charge TARIFFS in another form, and have already started to do so," he said in a long post on his Truth Social platform. AFP

HAVANA

Cuba announces total electricity blackout amid U.S. oil blockade

REUTERS

A power outage struck the entire island of Cuba on Monday, the state-owned electric company said, the latest blackout as the United States pursues its oil blockade in a bid to pressure the island's government. The cuts resulted from a "complete shutdown of the national grid," Union Nacional Electrica de Cuba said. AFP

KHOST

Afghan regime says three children, woman killed in Pakistan shelling

REUTERS

Three children and a woman were killed by Pakistani shelling in eastern Afghanistan overnight between Sunday and Monday, Afghan officials said. In total, 18 civilians have been killed in Afghanistan in the past week as a result of cross-border clashes between the two sides, according to the Afghan authorities. AFP

JERUSALEM

Israel police say shrapnel from missiles fell in Jerusalem holy sites

REUTERS

Israeli police said they found missile and interceptor fragments at holy sites in Jerusalem's Old City on Monday, including areas near the Al-Aqsa mosque and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. "During the recent missile salvo fired from Iran toward Jerusalem, several intercepts occurred over the city," the police said. AFP

'EU, UN discussing initiative for Hormuz Strait'

U.S. President Donald Trump had called on NATO allies and other countries to assist in forcibly opening the Strait; Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the U.K. 'will not be drawn into a wider war'; a German government spokesperson said, 'This war has nothing to do with NATO; it's not NATO's war'; Italy's government says it is not at war with anyone

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

The EU is in discussion with the UN on a Black Sea Grain initiative type arrangement to open up the Strait of Hormuz, according to its top diplomat Kaja Kallas. The strait, a waterway for a fifth of the world's oil supply, has been virtually closed by Iran following a conflict in the region which began after Israel and the U.S. struck Iran on February 28, sending oil prices soaring to above $100 per barrel.

Speaking ahead of an EU foreign affairs meeting in Brussels on Monday morning, Ms. Kallas said that she had discussed adopting a Black Sea initiative type arrangement for the Strait with UN Secretary General António Guterres. The Black Sea initiative, facilitated by the UN and Turkey, sought to ensure the safe export of grain and fertilizer from Ukraine' ports after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022.

Ms. Kallas pointed out that 85% of the oil that goes through the Strait of Hormuz is destined for Asia, and that the blocking of the Strait was also impacting fertilizer production and warned of food shortages next year if the Strait isn't opened up.

Ms. Kallas also suggested one option was to expand Aspides, the EU's security mission to protect vessels in the Red Sea from attacks by Houthi militants in Yemen. German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul had said he was "very sceptical" of using Aspides to secure the passage.

European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas speaks during a press conference. AFP

"...We will discuss with Member States whether it is possible to really change the mandate of this mission. The point is that whether the Member States are willing to actually use this mission," she said, adding that a third option was to form a "Coalition of the Willing" to open the Strait.

U.S. President Donald Trump had called on NATO allies and other countries to assist in forcibly opening the Strait, telling the *Financial Times* on Sunday that it would be "very bad" for the future of NATO if allies did not help the U.S. in opening the passage.

The easing of U.S. sanctions on Russia was a "dangerous precedent", Ms. Kallas said, adding that the closure of the Strait of Hormuz was to Russia's benefit, helping it to fund its war with Ukraine. New Delhi has also been in talks with Teheran regarding the safety of Indian vessels passing through the Strait.

European leaders resisted pressure from Mr. Trump to join Washington and Israel's war with Iran. "We will not be drawn into a wider war," British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said on Monday as he announced millions of pounds in assistance for households facing rising energy costs.

Referring to the British opposition parties, Mr. Starmer said: "They would have rushed the U.K. headlong into this war, without the full picture of what they were sending our forces into and without a plan to get us out."

Mr. Starmer said a diplomatic solution was needed once the armed conflict ended, "to constrain the threat posed by Iran", which he suggested lay with Teheran's ability to rebuild a nuclear programme, pose a ballistic missile threat and to arm proxy militias.

"This war has nothing to do with NATO. It's not NATO's war," German government spokesperson Stefan Korenilius said on Monday. The U.S. and Israel did not consult Europe before the war, Mr. Kornelius said.

"Italy is not at war with anyone and sending military ships in a war zone would mean entering the war," Italian Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini said, as per news agency Reuters.

France, like the U.K., has emphasised that it is focused on defence in the region not offensive strikes. French President Emmanuel Macron said on Sunday he had spoken to Iranian President Massoud Pezeshkian, and conveyed that France was only taking "strictly defensive" actions to protect its assets in the region and its regional partners and that it was "unacceptable" for France to be targeted.

Iran defiant as strikes hit Gulf transport, energy hubs

Agence France-Presse
TEHRAN

Iran said it was ready to take the West Asia war "as far as necessary" as it launched strikes across the region on Monday.

"By now they have... understood what kind of nation they are dealing with, one that does not hesitate to defend itself and is ready to continue the war wherever it may lead, and take it as far as necessary," Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told pressperson in Tehran.

A drone sparked a fuel tank fire near Dubai airport, disrupting travel, while a missile killed a civilian in their car in Abu Dhabi, and another drone sparked a blaze in in the emirate of Fujairah.

On the draw

'Israel doesn't seek perpetual war with Iran'

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Israel is not seeking a "perpetual war" with Iran, and would discuss a diplomatic way out of the war if Iran "changes course", said Reuven Azar, Israel's Ambassador to India. He, however, denied that Israel's goals had changed due to Tehran's retaliatory strikes. Addressing a press conference here as the war in West Asia entered its third week, Mr. Azar said there was no timeline on ending the war, but that the U.S. and Israel, which jointly launched the war with strikes killing Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khameini on February 28, had anticipated it lasting a "few weeks".

The comments came as External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar reached Brussels for meetings with his EU counterparts and held talks with EU Commission President Ursula Von Der Leyen. He said in an interview that his talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi had "yielded some results" in the safe passage of two LNG-laden ships through the Hormuz Strait, and that he hoped more would follow.

"If it is (diplomacy with Iran) yielding results for me, I would naturally continue to look at it," Mr. Jaishankar told the *Financial Times*. "Certainly, from

Reuven Azar

India's perspective, it is better that we reason and we co-ordinate and we get a solution than we don't," he added, suggesting that the world would be "better off" with a similar approach.

Reacting to the comments by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Mr. Azar claimed that Israel too "supports" diplomacy, and that Israel was in touch with all countries in the region.

"We are not here to do a perpetual war... we can have a diplomatic way out of this if the Iranians decide that they want to cooperate with the international community," he said, suggesting that one option would be that the U.S. and Israel would "finish hitting their military targets", and then return "to the table". The Iranian government has said it would not accept talks or a ceasefire at present, accusing the U.S. of destroying the dialogue process by attacking Iran even as negotiators were due to meet for a second round of talks.

When asked by *The Hindu* about whether his comments denoted a change of stance by Israel, given that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had earlier spoken of bringing a regime change, he said: "The aims of this operation haven't changed a bit... Of course, when our region is being attacked, there is an urge to defend the region, and we have been playing a role in hunting these drones and missiles that are not only launched against us, but are launched against our partners in the region," he said.

Sri Lanka announces four-day work week

The Hindu Bureau
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka on Monday announced a four-day working week – declaring Wednesdays off – for government institutions, schools, and universities, to conserve fuel as the escalating tensions in West Asia threaten a severe energy crisis.

Addressing a media conference in Colombo, the Commissioner General of Essential Services also encouraged the private sector to consider the option as the island nation, like many others, braces for possible fuel shortages.

All government functions will be put on hold temporarily, officials said. However, those employed in essential services will function all days.

One Battle After Another wins Oscar, in coronation for Paul Thomas Anderson

Associated Press
LOS ANGELES

Paul Thomas Anderson's *One Battle After Another* was crowned best picture at the 98th Academy Awards, handing Hollywood's top honour to a comic, multi-generational American saga of political resistance.

The ceremony on Sunday, which also saw Michael B. Jordan win best actor and *Sinners* cinematographer Autumn Durald Arkapaw make Oscar history as the first female director of photography to win the award, was a long-in-coming coronation for Mr. Anderson, a San Fernando Valley native who made his first short at age 18 and has been one of America's most lionised filmmakers for decades. Before Sunday, Mr. Anderson had never won an Oscar. But *One Battle After Another*, the favourite coming in, won six Oscars, including best director and best adapted screenplay for Mr. Anderson, the Oscars' first trophy for best casting and best supporting actor for an absent Sean Penn.

Director Paul Thomas Anderson and cast members of *One Battle After Another* pose after winning the Oscar on Sunday. AFP

"I wrote this movie for my kids to say sorry for the housekeeping mess that we left in this world – we're handing off to them," said Mr. Anderson while accepting the screenplay trophy. "But also with the encouragement that they will be the generation that hopefully brings us some common sense and decency."

Ryan Coogler's Jim Crow-set, blues-soaked vampire tale *Sinners*, which came in with a record 16 nominations, also landed some big and even historic wins. Mr. Coogler, the widely loved filmmaker, won the first Oscar in an unblemished career that started out with Mr. Jordan in 2013's *Fruitvale Station*.

Ms. Arkapaw was also the first Black person to win for best cinematography. Only the fourth female cinematographer ever nominated, her win was a long-in-coming triumph for women behind the camera.

"I really want all the women in room to stand up," said Ms. Arkapaw. "Because I don't feel like I get here without you guys."

Jessie Buckley won best actress for her performance as Agnes Shakespeare in *Hamnet*, making her the first Irish performer to ever win in the category.

Amy Madigan won best supporting actress for her performance in the horror thriller *Weapons*.

Trump says 'we're talking' to Iran but it is not 'ready' for deal

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Sunday that the United States was in discussions with Iran as the war enters its third week but that Tehran was not ready for a deal to end it. "Yes, we're talking to them," Mr. Trump told presspersons aboard Air Force One, without detailing the nature of such talks, when asked if there was any diplomacy under way to end a conflict that has spread across the West Asia and roiled global markets.

"But I don't think they're ready. But they are getting pretty close," Mr. Trump said.

Iran's foreign minister had denied earlier that any talks with the United States were taking place.

Donald Trump

Mr. Trump also said that NATO faces a "very bad" future if U.S. allies fail to help open the Strait of Hormuz.

In a brief interview with *The Financial Times*, Mr. Trump said that as the United States has aided Ukraine in the war with Russia, he expects Europe to help on the Strait of Hormuz, whose closure has sent energy prices soaring.

Israel begins 'ground operations' in Lebanon

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

The Israeli military said on Monday it had begun what it described as "limited ground operations" against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, with Defence Minister Israel Katz warning that those displaced would not return home until northern Israel was secure.

"In recent days, IDF troops from the 91st division have begun limited and targeted ground operations against key Hezbollah strongholds in southern Lebanon, aimed at enhancing the forward defence area," the military said in a statement.

"Prior to the troops' entry, the IDF conducted strikes using both artillery and the Israeli Air Force."

VALUABLE COLLECTIBLE

Coin used in T20 World Cup final auctioned for ₹26 lakh

PUNDOLE'S

The coin used for the toss in the ICC T20 World Cup final between India and New Zealand was recently sold for ₹26 lakh by Mumbai-based auction house Pundole's. The match ball fetched ₹24 lakh while the scoresheet went for ₹5.50 lakh in a timed auction of various official memorabilia from the World Cup.

SUPPORT STAFF

Chennai Super Kings names Foster as the fielding coach for IPL 2026

CSK

Chennai Super Kings has appointed former England wicketkeeper James Foster as its fielding coach for IPL 2026. Foster, who played seven Tests, 11 ODIs, and five T20Is, has extensive coaching experience in both franchise and international cricket. CSK will be Foster's second IPL stint after his spell at Kolkata Knight Riders.

SHORTLISTED

Arundhati in race for ICC Women's Player-of-the-Month award

FILE PHOTO: NIRMAL HARINDRAN

Pakistan's Sahibzada Farhan, Will Jacks of England and USA's Shadley van Schalkwyk have been shortlisted for the ICC Men's Player-of-the-Month award for February. Sri Lanka's Harshitha Samarawickrama, Fatima Sana from Pakistan and India's Arundhati Reddy have made the shortlist in the women's section.

HONOURS EVEN

10-man Punjab FC plays out a draw with FC Goa in the ISL

@INDSUPERLEAGUE

A 10-man Punjab FC held FC Goa, *in pic.*, to a 1-1 draw in their ISL match in New Delhi on Monday. Punjab, which took the lead through Effiong Nsungusi in the 27th minute, suffered a jolt when the goal-scorer was sent off in the 48th. Five minutes later, Dejan Drazic equalised for Goa. But Punjab held on to earn a point.

Winning T20 World Cup biggest moment of my career: Samson

The 31-year-old rates the unbeaten 97 against West Indies as his best knock in the showpiece; the experienced wicketkeeper-batter is determined to deliver his best for Chennai Super Kings in the upcoming IPL season

CRICKET

M.R. Praveen Chandran
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Sanju Samson is basking in the glory of India's T20 World Cup triumph and relishing the biggest moment of his career. However, Samson has now shifted his focus to the IPL and hopes to carry his superb form into the premier T20 tournament.

"Winning the T20 World Cup was the biggest moment of my career but now I am focussed on doing well in the IPL. I am turning out for a new team (Chennai Super Kings) and I would like to give my best for them,'' said Samson during an interaction with the media here on Monday.

The wicketkeeper-batter picked the unbeaten 97 against the West Indies as his best knock in the showpiece. "We had to win four matches which were virtually knockouts to win the World Cup and the talk in the dressing room centred around how difficult the task would be. I rate my knock against the West Indies as the best because it came under pressure and I made those runs while we were chasing a big target. I had to temper my aggression as we were losing wickets at the other end. I think I handled the pressure well and was able to control the chase," he said.

Golden run: Samson produced three 80-plus scores in the business end of the T20 World Cup to set up India's triumph. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Samson at a media interaction on Monday. A. JAYAMOHAN

Samson said he was excited to be part of CSK and was looking forward to playing alongside M.S. Dhoni.

"I am really excited to be part of CSK. I had spoken to Dhoni *bhai* over phone and had shared the dressing room with him when I was in the Indian team. I always had positives vibes after interactions with him.

"This will be different as I will be spending close to two months with Dhoni *bhai* in CSK and I am looking forward to it. It will be a great opportunity for me to observe him from close quarters and learn from him,'' he said.

The 31-year-old said he was overwhelmed by the support the Chennai crowd gave him when he played for India in the World Cup. "I was surprised by the support I got from the Chennai crowd during the World Cup. I think I am lucky. Maybe they see me as one of them. I don't want to disappoint and will give my best for CSK,'' he added.

Dhoni offers a pragmatic advice to rookie Prashant

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
CHENNAI

M.S. Dhoni's first piece of advice to Chennai Super Kings' (CSK) ₹14.20 crore recruit Prashant Veer was not about field placements or finishing games. It was about money.

Prashant revealed that the CSK legend's early counsel was refreshingly practical. "We haven't spoken much about cricket. He told me to save my money and not spend it unnecessarily," Prashant said with a smile after the inauguration of the 12th Pavit Singh Nayar Memorial all-India inter-collegiate T20 tournament at the Guru Nanak College here on Monday.

For the 20-year-old, the initial days in the camp have been about soaking in the "good environment" and learning from his "very supportive" teammates. The transition into the IPL ecosystem has been an eye-opener as well. "It's my first IPL, so I have never had practice sessions like this before. The environment and the intensity here are different, so it takes a little time to mingle and get used to it," he said.

The left-arm spin-bowling all-rounder also spoke about being compared with Ravindra Jadeja and insisted he was focused only on his own game. "First of all, I have to do what I know – what I have practised and what brought me here. If I think that I have to take his place, there will be a lot of pressure because what he has done for the franchise or the Indian team is not easy to do. Right now, I'm just focusing on my game," he said.

Young guns: Super Kings' latest additions Prashant and Kartik are eager to learn and improve. R. RAGU

The Uttar Pradesh player credited a consistent domestic season for his rise. "You cannot say one particular tournament decides your career. Throughout the domestic season of five or six months, you have to perform. This season, I was the Player-of-the-Tournament in the u-23 competition (BCCI men's u-23 State-A One-Day Trophy) and the Emerging Player in UPT20. The turning point, according to me, was that I shuttled between Mumbai and Kolkata to play both the State-A Trophy and the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy."

Wicketkeeper-batter Kartik Sharma, meanwhile, said his aim was to imbibe Dhoni's finishing ability and tactical understanding. Left-arm pacer Gurjapneet Singh highlighted he had beneficial conversations with bowling consultant Eric Simons last season. Dhoni's advice, he added, often comes down to reading the batter's mind. "He said if you have a good slower ball or yorker, you have to build on that. And to think at the last moment what the batter is expecting and bowl accordingly".

Shah urges long-term planning of India's sporting future

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

International Cricket Council (ICC) chair Jay Shah on Sunday urged the stakeholders to begin preparing for the 2030-36 global sporting cycle.

He stressed the importance of co-ordinated efforts across federations, corporates, athletes and the media. Shah was speaking at the Grand Sports Conclave on the third day of the Sports Journalists' Federation of India (SJFI) national convention here.

Shah.

Usha.

"While we focus on present competitions, we must also prepare for the future cycle – the 2030 Commonwealth Games, 2032 Brisbane Olympics and 2036 Olympics. Planning for these events has to begin well in advance if India wants to strengthen its global sporting footprint," Shah said.

Reflecting on the recent success of Indian cricket, Shah described the 2019-26 period as a golden phase. "We have achieved success across formats and age-groups, from under-19 tournaments to major ICC competitions," he said.

He also described India's recent T20 World Cup triumph as a landmark moment and credited the sports media for documenting the historic achievement. "When India lifted the World Cup, it was a proud moment for the entire country," Shah said.

Indian Olympic Association (IOA) president P.T. Usha said the future of the country's sporting ecosystem must be guided by policies that place athletes at the centre of decision-making. Usha said ensuring the preparation, welfare and development of athletes must remain the highest priority for administrators and sporting bodies.

"Athlete-first governance must guide the future of Indian sport," Usha said while addressing the members of the sports media fraternity.

Sinner and Sabalenka secure titles

TENNIS

Associated Press
INDIAN WELLS

Jannik Sinner defeated Daniil Medvedev 7-6(6), 7-6(4) in the Indian Wells Masters final on Sunday, winning seven straight points to rally from a 0-4 deficit in the second-set tie-breaker and claim the title without dropping a set.

The No. 2-ranked Italian beat Medvedev for the ninth time in their last 10 meetings to clinch his first crown at the California desert tournament.

World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka put it across Elena Rybakina 3-6, 6-3, 7-6(6) in the women's final for her first Indian Wells title.

Sabalenka, a runner-up in 2023 and 2025, sealed it with a big serve that Rybakina hit long. Sabalenka will now move to Miami where she is the defending champion.

Sinner. REUTERS

Humpy reconsidering Candidates trip due to the West Asia conflict

CHESS

C. Shyam Sundar
CHENNAI

India's top player Koneru Humpy is considering not travelling to Cyprus to participate in the upcoming FIDE Women's Candidates tournament, due to the ongoing conflict in West Asia.

Humpy and two other Indians – R. Vaishali and Divya Deshmukh – have qualified for the eight-player Candidates tournament with the winner getting the right to challenge the reigning World champion Ju Wenjun.

"Chess-wise, preparation is going well. I'm supposed to leave for Cyrpus on March 26... a bit unsure due to the West Asia war," she told *The Hindu*.

Humpy. FIDE

She said she hopes to take a call on her participation in the prestigious tournament "mostly by next Monday." The 38-year-old player said she had expressed her apprehensions to the global chess body (FIDE) but it seemed to be going ahead with the event. "No change in the schedule as it (FIDE) feels it is safe," she added.

Humpy said she is aware that she would miss a huge opportunity if she chooses not to travel to Cyprus but feels "life is bigger than sport." "Of course, I will miss the chance... but definitely not a pleasant situation to play..." The two-time World Rapid champion said her family also felt safety was the priority and would support any decision she takes.

Milan gives Inter Scudetto reprieve, Como eyes Champions League

Agence France-Presse
MILAN

AC Milan missed the chance to pile pressure on local rival Inter Milan in the Serie A title fight after falling to a 0-1 defeat at Lazio on Sunday.

Como beat 10-man Roma 2-1 to increase its hopes of a shock Champions League qualification.

Faced with the chance of cutting Inter's lead to five points, Milan fluffed its lines and fell to its second defeat in four matches. Gustav Isaksen's calm finish midway through the second half for Lazio allowed Inter to increase the gap to eight points.

Trailing at the break to Donyell Malen's early penalty, Como showed why it has shaken things up in Italy's top flight by coming back to beat a key rival for the final spot in Europe's elite club competition.

In Bundesliga, Stuttgart's Deniz Undav scored the only goal in the 1-0 home win over RB Leipzig.

The results: Serie A: Como 2 (Douvakis 59, Carlos 79) bt Roma 1 (Malen 7-pen); Lazio 1 (Isaksen 26) bt AC Milan 0; Pisa 3 (Moreo 9-pen, Caracciolo 52, 54) bt Cagliari 1 (Pavoletti 67); Sassuolo 0 lost to Bologna 1 (Dallinga 6); Verona 0 lost to Genoa 2 (Vitinha 61, Ostigard 86).
Bundesliga: Stuttgart 1 (Undav 56) bt RB Leipzig 0; Freiburg 0 lost to Union Berlin 1 (Woo-yeong 90+2); Werder Bremen 0 lost to Mainz 2 (Nebel 5, Jae-sung 52).

16-year-old Mayank ends North-East's long wait for a GM

C. Shyam Sundar
CHENNAI

At the age of six, Mayank Chakraborty took up chess, and when things didn't go too well for him in tournament play, it made him change his mind. He tried his hand at badminton but it wasn't smooth sailing there either. He shifted back to the 64-square game and hasn't looked back since.

The 16-year-old Mayank became India's 94th Grandmaster, the first-ever from Assam and the North-East to achieve the title, after winning a tournament in Stockholm recently.

Tracing the journey, his mother Monomita Chakraborty, a gynaecologist, said he developed a passion for the game, improved rapidly and began winning medals.

"He won a silver medal in the under-9 Open Nationals and followed it up by becoming the under-11 National champion.

He landed a silver in the under-10 open section in the Asian Youth tournament in Sri Lanka in 2019 and made winning a habit," she told *The Hindu*.

Later, he won the under-17 Nationals twice and his career was looking up. His improvement and the unavailability of coaches in Guwahati meant the family had to look outside for someone to train Mayank.

Mayank and his mother Monomita.

"He was trained initially by GM Saptarshi Roy Chowdhury and GM Swayams Mishra for the past five years or so," she said. About her role, Monomita said, "I have been a supporter so that he could realise his dream to be the first GM from Assam and the entire North-East.

India boasts of 93 GMs but Assam and North-East had been waiting for its GM for almost three decades since Viswanathan Anand became the first in 1988."

Mishra said: "Mayank's journey to becoming a GM is truly the result of many years of hard work, dedication, and strong support from his family. It has been very satisfying to watch his progress – from a young and talented child to a mature, strong, and determined player."

INBRIEF

Sodhi to miss remainder of T20I series against SA

Veteran New Zealand leg-spinner Ish Sodhi has been ruled out of the remainder of the T20I series against South Africa with a broken thumb. Sodhi was hit on the thumb during a net session on the eve of the opener at Bay Oval in Mount Maunganui on Saturday. The scans revealed the fracture, which will require at least four weeks of rehabilitation. South Africa leads the five-match series 1-0. The second T20I will be played in Hamilton on Tuesday.

Chelsea fined for breaking financial rules

Chelsea has been handed fines totalling €10.75 million and a suspended transfer ban for breaking financial rules, the Premier League said on Monday. Sanction agreements were reached after Chelsea self-reported potential breaches to the Football Association that came to light in 2022 when American investors Todd Boehly and Clearlake Capital led a consortium to buy out former owner Roman Abramovich.

Young outduels Fitzpatrick to claim Players title

Cameron Young outdueled England's Matt Fitzpatrick down the stretch to fire a four-under-par 68 and claim a one-shot victory at The Players Championship golf at TPC Sawgrass, Miami, on Sunday. The 28-year-old from New York pocketed the biggest PGA Tour win of his career after rattling in five birdies and a bogey in his final round. An elated Young said the mentally taxing nature of Sawgrass's unforgiving 7,352-yard layout had made the victory extra special. "It's absolutely exhausting," Young said. "This place has had my number the last few years. I've never really had a good finish here. It is incredibly taxing." Xander Schauffele took third place with a three-under-par 69 that left him on 11-under, while Scotland's Robert MacIntyre was a shot back on 10-under after a closing 69.

New Zealand and South Africa to host FIH Nations Cup

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) has announced that New Zealand and South Africa will host the fourth edition of the women's and men's FIH Hockey Nations Cup, with the winners being offered the opportunity to join the 2026-27 season of the FIH Hockey Pro League. Cape Town will host the men's event from June 11 to 20, which will involve some of the best teams in the world including South Africa, New Zealand, France, Korea, Japan, Wales, Malaysia, along with Scotland and Ireland. The women's tournament will be in Auckland from June 15 to 21. The line-up for the competition includes host New Zealand, USA, Japan, Korea, Chile, Scotland, along with France and India.

CITY ROUND-UP

Its Bhagirathi Group vs Infosys CC

Bhagirathi Group will take on Infosys CC in the final of the KSCA (Group II) second division tournament.

The scores (semifinals): Continental Automotive 101 in 20 overs lost to Bhagirathi Group 102/1 in 12.3 overs (Aaron K. Joseph 37 n.o., Aarav Mahesh 51 n.o.).

BEL SC 61 in 14.1 overs lost to Infosys 62/1 in 7.5 overs.

Bhandage stars for AGORC

M.S. Bhandage scored an unbeaten century (101) as AGORC beat Railway Institute South, Hubli, by eight wickets in the KSCA (Group II) first division tournament.

The scores: DELL 171/6 in 20 overs lost to Central Excise & Customs 172/6 in 19.3 overs (R.R. Rohan 54, R. Samarth 43).

Railway Institute South, Hubli, 146/8 in 20 overs (Madan Mohan Krishna 72, M.R. Darshan 4/16) lost to AGORC 147/2 in 12.3 overs (M.S. Bhandage 101 n.o.).

Double for Jain University

Jain University (Bengaluru) bagged first place in both men's and women's divisions at the Chinnadanadu Cup, an all-India inter-collegiate invitational basketball tournament held in Kurubarapet (Kolar) recently.

English sides seek redemption from Champions League reality check

Man City, Chelsea and Tottenham have seemingly difficult tasks as they trail by three goals against Real, PSG and Atletico respectively

FOOTBALL

Agence France-Presse
MANCHESTER

Kings of the league phase, England's six Champions League sides were made to look like paupers in the first legs of the last 16 as they failed to muster a win between them.

Manchester City, Chelsea and Tottenham have seemingly insurmountable mountains to climb, even with home advantage this week, as they trail by three goals against Real Madrid, Paris Saint-Germain and Atletico Madrid respectively.

Liverpool and Arsenal will expect to still get past Galatasaray and Bayer Leverkusen, while Newcastle is dreaming of shocking Barcelona in the Camp Nou after outplaying the Spanish champion in a 1-1 draw at St. James' Park.

Better placed: Arsenal, which eked out a draw against Leverkusen, will be expected to win at home and progress. REUTERS

But after unprecedented domination of the early stages of the competition, AFP Sport looks at the reasons behind a reality check for the Premier League's best.

The Premier League's financial advantage over Europe's other major leagues, thanks to far more lucrative television rights deals, has not been reflected in the latter stages of the Champions League for some time.

Only three of the last 13 Champions League winners have come from England.

Arsenal was the only Premier League club to reach the last four last season and none reached the semifinals in the 2023/24 campaign.

Fatigue

Fatigue after a gruelling winter schedule is often cited as the main factor for the decline of English sides as the only major league without a winter break and two domestic cup competitions.

French great and former UEFA president Michel Platini once referred to English sides as "lions in winter, lambs in spring".

"In general, I think it is not helpful for English clubs not to have a winter break," said Liverpool boss Arne Slot.

Of the six English sides involved in the Champions League, four of them also made the League Cup semifinals and five were involved in FA Cup action in the days before their European disappointment last week.

The fixtures:

Tuesday: Sporting vs Bodo/Glimt (11.15 p.m.); Chelsea vs PSG, Man City vs Real Madrid, Arsenal vs Bayern Leverkusen (1.30 a.m., Wednesday).

Wednesday: Barcelona vs Newcastle (11.15 p.m.); Tottenham vs Atletico Madrid, Liverpool vs Galatasaray, Bayern vs Atalanta (1.30 a.m., Thursday).

Happy bunch: The North Zone squad celebrates its triumph. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Unbeaten North Zone claims J.K. Bose cricket title

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

North Zone won the J.K. Bose inter-zonal T20 tournament after another emphatic win against East Zone at the Roshanara Cricket Ground on Monday. The tournament was held as part of the Golden Jubilee edition of the Sports Journalists Federation of India (SJFI) national convention in the national capital.

North sealed the title by stitching together an unbeaten run in the competition. On Monday, North chased down 136 in 9.5 overs. Rishabh Singh smashed an unbeaten 87, and finished with 289 runs in the competition. In the other match of the day, West defeated South by 10 wickets at the Delhi Police Ground.

SJAM-1 paddlers reign

Meanwhile, Sports Journalists Association of Mumbai (SJAM-1) emerged champion in the team event of the A.C. Bali Table Tennis Tournament.

SJAM-1 defeated the Delhi Sports Journalists Association (DSJA-1) in the final. The winning SJAM-1 team comprised Amol Karhadkar and Ashwin Ferro while DSJA-1, represented by Bharat Sharma, Kushan Sarkar and Norris Pritam, finished runner-up.

Karhadkar also enjoyed a successful outing in the individual event. He won the men's singles title, finishing ahead of K. Keerthivasan of the Tamil Nadu Sports Journalists Association.

The scores: East Zone 135/6 in 20 overs (Pranab Shil 47 n.o., Abhishek 39 n.o.) lost to North Zone 136/0 in 9.5 overs (Rishabh Singh 87 n.o., Akash Rawal 31 n.o.).

South Zone 97 in 18.5 overs (V.L. Sashank 34, Deep Sudhakar 4/13, Taus Rizvi 3/13) lost to West Zone 98/0 in 13 overs (Taus Rizvi 53 n.o., Devendra Pandey 36 n.o.).

Verstappen sounds off after 'frustrating' result at Chinese GP

FORMULA ONE

Reuters
SHANGHAI

Max Verstappen wasn't too happy after he retired from the Chinese Grand Prix on Sunday following 45 laps due to a car issue. That abbreviated finish came on the heels of the 28-year-old Dutchman's "disaster" during Saturday's Sprint.

"Same problem as yesterday in the start, so we were last again, and then tried to find my way forward but again (we had) the same problem as in the Sprint, where there was just a lot of deg, a lot of graining on the tyres," Verstappen said. "That always makes it very complicated, and then we had to retire the car with the ERS cooling issues."

When pressed about how Red Bull can respond following an uneventful weekend, the four-time champion (2021-24) was quick with a response.

"It's definitely not where we want to be, of course, but I also know that the team is giving it everything and it's frustrating.

"At the end of the day we need to try and figure it out together. We'll of course try to be a bit better for Japan, but after that we have a bit of a bigger break now that hopefully we can use to sort some stuff out."

Kibet headlines the field for TCS World 10k in Bengaluru

Sports Bureau
BENGALURU

The young and upcoming Harbert Kibet, the seasoned Muktar Edris, and capable runners in Khairi Bejiga, Rodrigue Kwizera and Gemechu Dida are set to headline the men's field at the TCS World 10k, a World Athletics Gold Label Race, to be held here on April 26.

Ugandan Kibet, 20, was a finalist at the World Junior Athletics Championships two years ago, and made his first appearance in a 10K race earlier this year, winning in the Spanish town of Castellon in 26:39s, which is still 2026's world-leading time.

Edris, from Ethiopia, is a two-time world 5,000m champion in 2017 and 2019.

Among women, defending champion Sarah Chelangat from Uganda is set to return, and if she eventually triumphs, it will be the second instance of a woman bagging consecutive titles in the Garden City after the late Kenyan runner Agnes Tirop in 2018 and 2019.

Other notable names among women include world steeplechase record-holder Beatrice Chepkoech and fellow Kenyan Cintia Chepngeno, who won silver in the Bengaluru and Shanghai 10Ks last year.

Espionage takes the honours in Time And Place Plate

RACING

HYDERABAD: Trainer D. Netto's ward Espionage, ridden by Kuldeep Singh Sr., claimed the Time And Place Plate, the main event of Monday's (Mar. 16) races here.

1. OWN OPINION PLATE (1,200M): SPECIAL STAR (Ajay Kumar) 1, La Fleuriere (Trevor) 2, Daring Spirit (P. Sai K) 3 and Zindabad (Santosh Raj) 4. Not run: Beverley and Star Councillor. 3/4, 1/2 and 2-1/4. 1m, 13.46s. ₹36 (w), 10, 17 and 103 (p). SHP: 32, THP: 232, FP: 126, Q: 46, Tanala: 2,177. Favourite: Double Bubble. Owners: M/s. Ashok Ranpise, Seshadri Reddy Pochana, Teegala Vijender Reddy, Teegala Sumant Reddy, Teja Gollapudi, Bollineni Krishnaiah, Mukund Kakani, Pochana Arjun Reddy & Capt. Jamshed J, Appoo. Trainer: K.S.V. Prasad Raju.

NOTE: *A stewards' enquiry was conducted into the running of this race. It was observed that while negotiating the bend, Kitsune (Afroz Khan up) shifted in sharply and caused interference to Double Bubble (Sonu Kumar astride), resulting in the latter suffering a fall. Sonu, however, was reported to be out of danger. After examining the race replay and interviewing Afroz, the Stewards decided to disqualify Kitsune.*

2. ELUSIVE HERO PLATE (1,400M): CERTAINITY (Kuldeep Singh Sr.) 1, Corte Madera (Suraj Narredu) 2, Mystical Dawn (P. Ajeeth K) 3 and Misty Night (Akshay K) 4. 1, 3 and 1-1/4. 1m, 25.97s. ₹66 (w), 11, 10 and 19 (p). SHP: 27, THP: 21, FP: 109, Q: 34, Tanala: 257. Favourite: Corte Madera. Owner: Mr. S. Pathy. Trainer: Laxman Singh.

3. DEMOCRACY PLATE (1,600M): REAL THALAIVAA (Dhanu S. Deora) 1, Whistledown (P. Ajeeth K) 2, Arizona Sun (Akshay K) 3 and Cape May (Suraj Narredu) 4. 3, 3-3/4 and 3. 1m, 40.28s. ₹93 (w), 14, 10 and 12 (p). SHP: 32, THP: 52, FP: 907, Q: 314, Tanala: 2,200. Favourite: Cape May. Owner: Mr. Vipin Kalra. Trainer: Jasbir Singh.

4. ARMAGNAC PLATE (1,200M): DECCAN SPIRIT (Dhanu S. Deora) 1, Tootsie Darling (P. Ajeeth K) 2, Warwick (Afroz K) 3 and Mexican Wave (Rafique Sk.) 4. 3/4, 3/4 and 3-1/4. 1m, 12.53s. ₹117 (w), 34, 11 and 39 (p). SHP: 40, THP: 80, FP: 609, Q: 130, Tanala: 4,742. Favourite: Tootsie Darling. Owners: Mr. Shailendra Singh & Mr. K. Ram Gopal Rao. Trainer: Magan Singh.

5. HIMALAYA PLATE (1,400M): MADANTE (Akshay Kumar) 1, Gold Touch (Kuldeep Sr.) 2, Grit 'N' Grace (Mukesh K) 3 and Northern Sky (Antony Raj 4. 4-3/4, 3/4 and 3/4. 1m, 25.04s. ₹49 (w), 12, 43 and 12 (p). SHP: 114, THP: 38, FP: 1,633, Q: 585, Tanala: 5,911. Favourite: Grit N Grace. Owner: M/s. Gallop & Grace LLP. Trainer: L.V.R. Deshmukh.

6. TIME AND PLACE PLATE (1,400M): ESPIONAGE (Kuldeep Singh Sr.) 1, Nonpariel (Mukesh K) 2, Diablo (Ajay K) 3 and One N Only (P. Sai K) 4. 1-1/4, 3/4 and Neck. 1m, 24.60s. ₹55 (w), 18, 13 and 33 (p). SHP: 34, THP: 69, FP: 207, Q: 77, Tanala: 1,915. Favourite: Nonpariel. Owners: M/s. Prakash Babu, P. Ranga Raju, Donald Anthony Netto & Tripuranenivenkata Aditya Chowdary. Trainer: D. Netto.

7. BLOOMER PLATE (1,200M): NATU NATU (Ajay Kumar) 1, Deccan Ranger (Akshay K) 2, Battle On (Md. Ismail) 3 and Niloufer The Great (Afroz K) 4. 1-1/4, 6 and Neck. 1m, 14.08s. ₹49 (w), 37, 14 and 17 (p). SHP: 29, THP: 84, FP: 204, Q: 85, Tanala: 737. Favourite: Deccan Ranger. Owners: Mrs. Shobana Kamineni, Ms. Anuspala Kamineni & Mr. Paunsh Kamineni. Trainer: Laxman Singh.

Jackpot: 70%: ₹3, 79, 330 (c/f) & 30%: 27, 095 (6 tkts.).

Mini jackpot: (i) 49, 445 (c/o), (ii) 1,48, 822 (1 tkt).

Treble: (i) 14,585 (1 tkt.), (ii) 3,575 (18 tkts.).

LIVE TELECAST

New Zealand vs South Africa: 2nd T20I, Sony Sports Ten 1 & LIV, 11.45 a.m.

Indian Football League: Sony Sports Ten 5 & LIV, 4 p.m.

Champions League: Sony Sports Ten 2, 5 & LIV, 11.15 p.m. & 1.30 a.m. (Wednesday)

Brooklyn Beauty for feature event

HYDERABAD: The seven-year-old mare Brooklyn Beauty, who ran second in her last start, should make amends in the upper division of the Onnu Onnu Plate, the feature event of Tuesday's (Mar. 16) races.

1 NARAYANPET PLATE (DIV. I) (1,100m), 4-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 3.00 p.m.: 1. Divine Connection (2) Abhay Singh 60, 2. Blissful (9) Md. Ekram 59, 3. Windsor (8) Surya Prakash 57.5, 4. Diligence (3) Kuldeep Sr. 55.5, 5. La Quinta (4) Suraj Narredu 55.5, 6. Red Hot Punch (5) P. Ajeeth K 54.5, 7. Feel The Magic (10) D.S. Deora 52.5, 8. Fox Worth (6) P. Sai K 52.5, 9. Fortune Art (1) H.M. Akshay 52, 10. Atreya (7) B. Nikhil 51, 11. Golden Aura (12) Afroz K 51, 12. Marissa (11) Uday Kiran 51 and 13. Timeless Elegance (13) G. Naresh 51.

1. LA QUINTA, 2. FEEL THE MAGIC, 3. RED HOT PUNCH

2 FLIRTING VISION PLATE (1,200m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 3.35: 1. Crimson Rose (5) B. Nikhil 60, 2. Inderdhanush (6) Rafique Sk. 60, 3. Knotty Senorita (8) P. Sai K 60, 4. Star Medal (2) Abhay Singh 58.5, 5. Assured Success (4) I. Chisty 58, 6. Silver Lining (12) Mohit 56, 7. Dream To Fly (1) G. Naresh 55.5, 8. Glimmer Of Hope (11) Sonu K 55.5, 9. Quality Warrior (9) Md. Ismail 55.5, 10. Smart Boy (10) B.R. Kumar 55, 11. Taaliyah (3) Surya Prakash 55, 12. N.R.I. Range (14) Afroz K 54.5, 13. Aos Si (7) Santosh Raj 52 and 14. Blazing Saddle (13) Ajay K 51.5.

1. DREAM TO FLY, 2. SMART BOY, 3. N.R.I. RANGE

3 ONNU ONNU PLATE (DIV. I) (1,400m), 4-y-o and upward, rated 60 to 85, 4.05: 1. Brooklyn Beauty (9) Sonu K 60, 2. Decoy (12) Mukesh K 59.5, 3. Maverick (5) Kuldeep Sr. 58, 4. Kingston (2) Abhay Singh 56.5, 5. N.R.I. Sport (8) H.M. Akshay 55.5, 6. Runlikethewind (13) G. Naresh 55.5, 7. Romantic Grey (11) Afroz K 55, 8. Star Forever 9. Vyasa (3) Ashad Asbar 54.5, 10. Dyanoosh (6) Surya Prakash 54, 11. Best Buddy (10) Md. Ekram 53, 12. Leather Back (7) Rafique Sk. 53, 13. Lucky Zone (4) P. Ajeeth K 53 and 14. Pacific Heights (1) Ajay K 53.

1. BROOKLYN BEAUTY, 2. DECOY, 3. VYASA

4 MOSSY BANK PLATE (1,400m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 4.35: 1. Bholi Punjaban (8) Mohit 60, 2. Clara (5) I. Chisty 59.5, 3. Rival (14) Suraj Narredu 56.5, 4. Bhairava (10) P. Ajeeth K 56, 5. Fly Tothe Stars (9) Ashad Asbar 55, 6. Rolls Royce (11) Abhay Singh 55, 7. Top In Class (1) Md. Ismail 55, 8. Clefairy (13) P. Sai K 54, 9. Hoping Star (7) D.S. Deora 52.5, 10. Just Incredible (3) Rafique Sk. 52.5, 11. Normui (2) B.R. Kumar 52, 12. Only The Brave (12) Uday Kiran 52, 13. Great Giver (6) Surya Prakash 51.5 and 14. Sopranos (4) B. Nikhil 51.

1. BHAIRAVA, 2. RIVAL, 3. CLEFAIRY

5 HYDERABAD PLATE (1,100m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II), 5.05: 1. Divine Tiger (4) P. Ajeeth K 56, 2. Fugo (5) Trevor 56, 3. Knotty Circuit (9) P. Sai K 56, 4. Noble Fella (–), 5. Sporting Touch (7) Ashad Asbar 56, 6. Varttamaan (2) Kuldeep Sr. 56, 7. You Tuber (1) Abhay Singh 56, 8. Anemara (3) B.R. Kumar 54.5, 9. Khamagani (6) B. Nikhil 54.5, 10. My Day (8) Rafique Sk. 54.5 and 11. Veera's Lakshmi (10) Md. Ismail 54.5.

1. FUGO, 2. DIVINE TIGER, 3. KNOTTY CIRCUIT

6 ONNU ONNU ONNU PLATE (DIV. II) (1,400m), 4-y-o and upward, rated 60 to 85 (Cat. II), 5.35: 1. Cherie Chevalier (13) Antony Raj 60, 2. Hurricane Bay (1) Afroz K 58, 3. Encore (14) Md. Ekram 56.5, 4. Calistoga (5) Ajay K 56, 5. Northern Waves (8) Suraj Narredu 55.5, 6. Arabeska (9) Akshay K 55, 7. Dapper Look (3) Abhay Singh 55, 8. Secret Saint (6) Trevor 55, 9. Baisa (11) G. Naresh 54, 10. Kings Best (12) P. Sai K 54, 11. Noble Heart (10) Kuldeep Sr. 54, 12. Glorious Power (4) Santosh Raj 53.5, 13. Shadow Fax (2) H.M. Akshay 53.5 and 14. Torchbearer (7) P. Ajeeth K 52.5.

1. CHERIE CHEVALIER, 2. NORTHERN WAVES, 3. SECRET SAINT

7 NARAYANPET PLATE (DIV. II) (1, 100m), 4-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 6.05: 1. Authoritarian (2) Ajay K 60, 2. Catchme If You Can (4) D.S. Deora 60, 3. American Flame (5) H.M. Akshay 57, 4. Lights On (7) Abhay Singh 57, 5. Trust Me (1) G. Naresh 57, 6. Victory Run (10) Surya Prakash 54, 7. Ek (3) Afroz K 53.5, 8. My Honey (11) Kuldeep Sr. 53.5, 9. Faizah (6) Ashad Asbar 52.5, 10. Don Cherie (8) Md. Ekram 52, 11. Shreshhtha (9) B. Nikhil 52 and 12. Most Beautiful (12) Uday Kiran 51.

1. AUTHORITARIAN, 2. VICTORY RUN, 3. EK

Day's best: **LA QUINTA**

Jackpot: 2, 3, 4, 6 & 7.

Mini Jackpot: (i) 1, 2, 3 & 4, (ii) 4, 5, 6 & 7.

Treble: (i) 2, 3 &4, (ii) 5, 6 & 7.

Tanala: All races.